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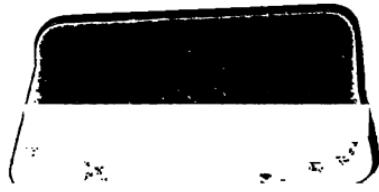
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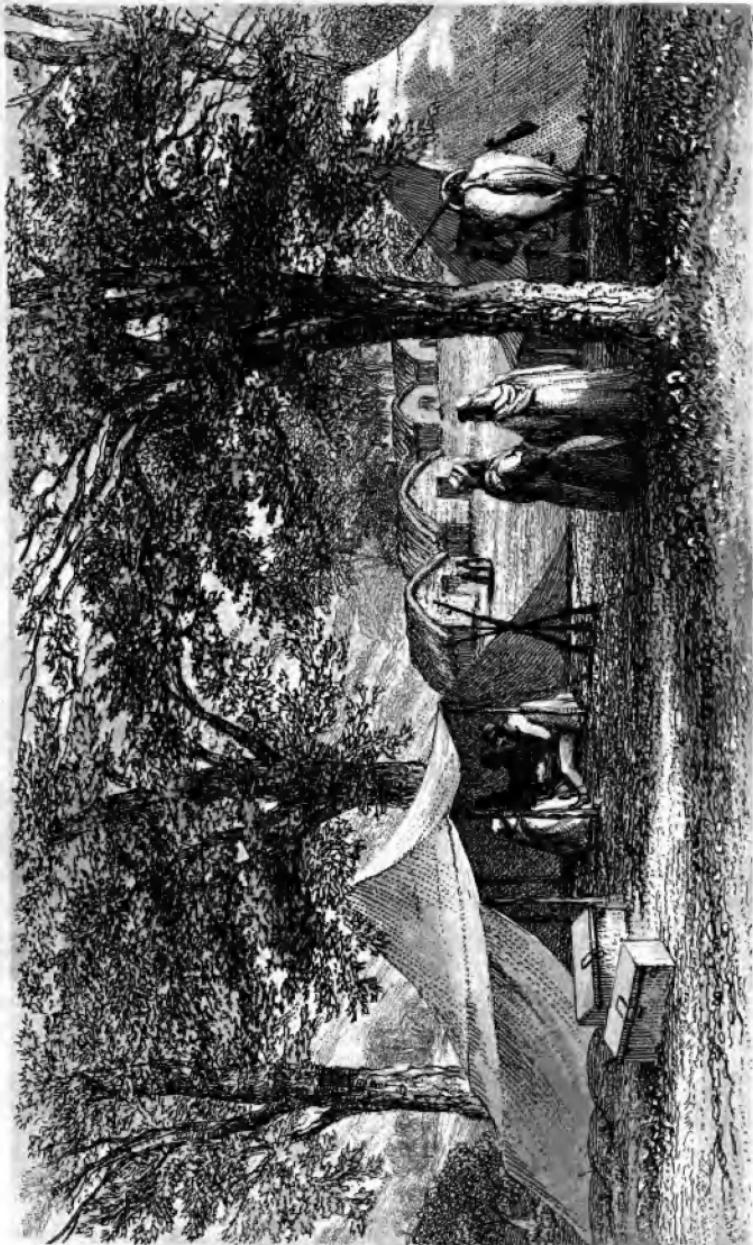








"VALLEYS OF THE BRAHMAPUKE, IN THE ANNUAL."



1. $\{x_i\}_{i=1}^n$ is a set of points in \mathbb{R}^d such that $x_i \in \mathcal{X}$ for all $i \in [n]$.

2. $\{y_i\}_{i=1}^n$ is a set of labels associated with each point x_i , where $y_i \in \mathcal{Y}$ for all $i \in [n]$.

3. $\{x_i\}_{i=1}^n$ and $\{y_i\}_{i=1}^n$ are drawn from a joint distribution $p(x, y)$.

4. $\{x_i\}_{i=1}^n$ and $\{y_i\}_{i=1}^n$ are used to train a machine learning model f .

5. $\{x_i\}_{i=1}^n$ and $\{y_i\}_{i=1}^n$ are used to evaluate the performance of the model f .

6. $\{x_i\}_{i=1}^n$ and $\{y_i\}_{i=1}^n$ are used to make predictions on new data.

7. $\{x_i\}_{i=1}^n$ and $\{y_i\}_{i=1}^n$ are used to update the model f based on new information.

8. $\{x_i\}_{i=1}^n$ and $\{y_i\}_{i=1}^n$ are used to test the robustness of the model f .

9. $\{x_i\}_{i=1}^n$ and $\{y_i\}_{i=1}^n$ are used to analyze the features of the data.

10. $\{x_i\}_{i=1}^n$ and $\{y_i\}_{i=1}^n$ are used to visualize the data.

11. $\{x_i\}_{i=1}^n$ and $\{y_i\}_{i=1}^n$ are used to perform dimensionality reduction.

12. $\{x_i\}_{i=1}^n$ and $\{y_i\}_{i=1}^n$ are used to perform clustering.

13. $\{x_i\}_{i=1}^n$ and $\{y_i\}_{i=1}^n$ are used to perform classification.

14. $\{x_i\}_{i=1}^n$ and $\{y_i\}_{i=1}^n$ are used to perform regression.

15. $\{x_i\}_{i=1}^n$ and $\{y_i\}_{i=1}^n$ are used to perform clustering.

16. $\{x_i\}_{i=1}^n$ and $\{y_i\}_{i=1}^n$ are used to perform dimensionality reduction.

17. $\{x_i\}_{i=1}^n$ and $\{y_i\}_{i=1}^n$ are used to perform classification.

18. $\{x_i\}_{i=1}^n$ and $\{y_i\}_{i=1}^n$ are used to perform regression.

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24. $\{x_i\}_{i=1}^n$ and $\{y_i\}_{i=1}^n$ are used to perform dimensionality reduction.

25. $\{x_i\}_{i=1}^n$ and $\{y_i\}_{i=1}^n$ are used to perform classification.



ALGERIA AND TUNIS

IN 1845.

BY

CAPTAIN J. CLARK KENNEDY,

18TH (ROYAL IRISH) REGIMENT.

AN ACCOUNT OF A JOURNEY

MADE THROUGH THE TWO REGENCIES

BY

VISCOUNT FEILDING AND CAPT. KENNEDY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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1846.

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TO THE
VISCOUNT FEILDING,

THE FOLLOWING PAGES,

A SLIGHT MEMORIAL OF THE SCENES WE VISITED TOGETHER,

ARE DEDICATED BY

HIS SINCERE AND ATTACHED FRIEND,

J. CLARK KENNEDY.

LONDON,
March, 2, 1846.

PREFACE.

HAVING passed some months of the winter in Paris, I had heard much on the subject of Algeria, and, being desirous of judging for myself, I made arrangements for spending a portion of the period of my leave of absence in Northern Africa. By the advice of officers who had served in Algeria, I delayed my journey until the beginning of March, and, passing the interval at Nice, I was there joined by Lord Feilding, and we made the excursion together.

In the following narrative of our travels I have entered neither into political discussions, nor into crude theories on what may be the future condition of the southern coast of the

Mediterranean ; I have merely endeavoured to describe what I saw, and to record a portion of the information collected in the course of our journey.

Some of the details may possibly be deemed trivial ; but it is often in the petty occurrences of every-day life that the character of a people may be studied to greater advantage than in the more serious events where the fiercer passions play their part, and which, when roused, give the same colouring to the actions of the civilized European, the wild Arab of the desert, or the still ruder savage.

If I have succeeded in transferring to the reader any portion of the interest that we experienced in traversing a country at present so little known, and which once played no inconsiderable part in the history of the world — my object will have been attained.

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ALGERIA AND TUNIS

IN 1845.

CHAPTER I.

Arrival at Marseilles—Preparations for a voyage—Phénicien steamer—Algiers from the sea—Bombarded by the English in 1816—Landing—Place de Gouvernement—Gay scene—Explosion of a magazine—Contradictory rumours—Many lives lost—Fate of Madame ***—Probable cause of the explosion—Streets—Speculation—Walk through the upper town—The Kasbah—The interior—“Coup de chasse-mouche”—Harem and treasury.

LEAVING Nice early on the morning of the 3rd of March, we arrived at Marseilles the afternoon of the next day; and having secured our berths in the African steamer which was to sail for Algiers on the 5th, at five P.M., we were fully employed until that

time in making the final arrangements for the journey we had in contemplation.

Our baggage was reduced to the smallest possible compass, every thing not absolutely necessary being left in Marseilles; our passports were *visés*, the final effort undergone to remember if any thing had been left behind or forgotten, and every article, from "Gay Lussac's" mountain barometer to the portable cooking apparatus, having successively passed in mental review, we embarked at the hour appointed on board the "*Phénicien*." After waiting some time for the mail, delayed by bad weather in the interior, we put to sea at seven o'clock, with a brisk breeze blowing in our teeth, a heavy sea on, and the prospect before us of a rough and tedious passage.

Like most of the French steamers, the engines of the "*Phénicien*" had not sufficient power to enable her to make much way against a head wind; but being a good sea-boat, this did not signify so much, as it was easily remedied by patience, a virtue which, however, was not possessed by an elderly Frenchman in the next cabin, who,

between the paroxysms of sea-sickness, occupied his time in pitying himself, swearing as only a Parisian can swear, and asking the steward when we should arrive.

Passing to the eastward of Minorca, we made the African coast on the 8th, at mid-day, and after a passage of nearly three days, fifty hours being the usual time in moderate weather, we entered the harbour of Algiers at half past four in the afternoon.

Few cities have a more striking appearance than Algiers, when approached from the sea. Situated on the western side of the bay, the city is built on the steep slope of a hill, in the form of a triangle, the base of which rests on the Mediterranean ; and when seen at such a distance that the eye cannot master the details, appears an immense cone of the whitest marble rising from the sea, and contrasting beautifully with the dark masses of the surrounding country. The mole, stretching from the shore in the shape of a **T**, surmounted by a lighthouse, and bristling with cannon, forms with its southern arm a secure harbour, still further defended by the triple tiers of the batteries

on the mainland, and is justly an object of pride to Englishmen, as the scene of an action rarely equalled in the annals of naval warfare for boldness and daring, and where the result of Lord Exmouth's expedition,—not glorious to the British fleet only, but to the cause of humanity in general,—so fully realised the object. Here, under these batteries, Christian slavery, which to the disgrace of Christian Europe had existed in the states of Barbary for nearly eleven centuries, received its death-blow in August 1816.

From the shore the buildings rise terrace above terrace to the summit of the city, where the Kasbah, the ancient palace and citadel of the deys, forms the apex of the triangle. The monotony of the Moorish houses, flat roofed and glaring with whitewash, is somewhat broken by the new French buildings in the lower part of the town, by the domes and towers of the mosques, and by the graceful forms of the cypress and palm, a few of which having escaped destruction, still stand in the courts of the larger mansions—silent witnesses of

the events that have changed the dull repose of the harem garden, into the lively bustle of a French barrack-yard. Outside the walls, Fort de l'Empereur, situated on a higher point of the ridge, and commanding the Kasbah, rises to the south ; the hills, gently sloping to the sea, are studded with country-houses and gardens ; and in the extreme distance are seen the lofty range of the lesser Atlas, whose highest summits, still capped with snow, form an appropriate back-ground to the scene.

At the landing-place there was the usual amount of noise and confusion ; half naked Arab boys and dirty Jews wrangling for our baggage, and only for an instant interrupting their mutual torrent of Arabic abuse, to recommend themselves in broken French to our notice. Every thing must have an end, and in this case the point was at last settled by the strongest marching off to the custom-house, where, excepting a little demur about our guns, we had no trouble ; and from thence, entering the city by the Marine Gate and traversing a broad and handsome street of the same name, we

reached the Hotel de la Regence, not sorry to find ourselves again on shore, with the comfortable prospect of an immovable dinner-table, stationary decanters, and dishes that kept their own places.

At dinner we had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of the Count de Goltz, a Prussian officer of cuirassiers, who had arrived in Algeria the preceding day, and our objects of travel being nearly similar, acquaintance soon ripened into intimacy, and our accidental meeting was the forerunner of many agreeable days, passed in each others society, in a land equally new and interesting to the one as to the other.

The evening was fine, although cold, and after dinner we joined the crowd of idlers in the "Place de Gouvernement," an open space in the centre of the city, planted with orange trees, the formation of which was one of the first works undertaken by the French after the occupation. Three sides are nearly enclosed with handsome well-built houses in the French style, and the fourth facing the sea, juts out in an obtuse angle, of which a portion of the northern

face is occupied by a mosque of no architectural beauty, and the other, overlooking a battery of heavy guns, affords a splendid view of the port, the shipping, and the Bay of Algiers. In the Place are the principal hotels, the fashionable cafés, and the best shops. As the night closed in, the cafés blazed with light, and the square was thronged with officers, soldiers, sailors, Jews, Moors, Arabs, the wealthy merchant and the poor colonist, the freed negro, the awkward conscript of the last "tirage," and the handsome dragoon in the soldierlike uniform of the "Chasseurs d'Afrique" mingled together in a scene of picturesque confusion, each following his own method, in search of pleasure after the toils of the past day.

This scene of gaiety was, however, soon to change; at ten o'clock we left the Café de la Perle, and lingering near the entrance with the sound of the music still ringing in our ears, were startled by a bright flash in the direction of the harbour, a sheet of flame rose into the air, instantaneously followed by a loud explosion, and then several smaller ones in rapid succession; the ground

shook as with an earthquake, and broken glass from the windows facing the sea fell in showers around us. For a few seconds a dead silence reigned ; the crowd seemed paralyzed,—not a word was spoken,—each looked round upon his neighbours as if seeking information from those as ignorant as himself. Then with one impulse, as if the spell that had held the crowd motionless had been suddenly broken, a rush was made towards the harbour.

Every body spoke at once ; a hundred wonderful and contradictory rumours passed from mouth to mouth with extraordinary rapidity,—“ Abd-el-Kader and the Arabs are attacking the city,” cried one. “ It is an earthquake.” “ No, no, it is the English, it is ‘ la perfide Albion,’ ” exclaimed another, “ who, according to her usual custom, has, without declaring war, seized upon the harbour and the fleet.” “ Nonsense,” answered another, “ I tell you the great magazine on the Mole has exploded, and the lighthouse, the arsenal, the admiralty, the admiral and all his staff are blown up.”

This last report, although greatly exag-

gerated, unfortunately proved to be but too true ; upwards of a hundred fellow beings had in a few seconds been hurried unwarned into the presence of their God. Lord Feilding having been separated in the confusion from Count de Goltz and myself was one of the first who reached the scene, and met the survivors of this sad event ; officers, soldiers and sailors, mixed with ladies, some dressed for an evening party, and others risen from their beds, with infants in their arms, as they had rushed from the neighbouring houses in the first impulse of terror : the moans of the wounded, alas ! but few in number, were mingled with the screams of the frightened children ; wives were seeking their husbands, parents their children, and friends each other ; no one knew who had perished, or who had escaped, and in some cases this dreadful uncertainty lasted until morning ; members of the same family having in the darkness and confusion taken refuge in different houses.

Next morning on visiting the scene, we found that a large building, situated between the admiralty and the light house, was a

heap of ruins; blocks of stone, huge beams, and masses of masonry confusedly thrown together, the portions of the walls that were still standing, cracked in various places; the houses occupied by the flag captain and the captain of the port much damaged, the sides nearest the explosion blown down; the lantern of the “phare” broken, and the admiralty slightly damaged.

During this and many succeeding days the troops were busily employed searching for the bodies, many of which were not discovered for some time; one poor wretch was found alive amid the ruins on the fourth day, and in one long room, used as an artillery barrack, and containing rows of beds on either side, nearly fifty bodies were found lying in death, as they had laid them down to sleep, and in the centre the crushed and disfigured remains of a party engaged at play, the stakes before them and the cards still firmly grasped in their stiffened hands.

The fate of Madame * * *, the wife of the port captain, was most melancholy. Whilst in the midst of her friends, who to the number of thirty, were that evening col-

lected at her house, she heard her child crying in the adjoining room, she hastened to soothe it, and on crossing the passage, from one door to the other, the explosion took place : she was killed instantaneously ; her child in one room, and her husband and friends in the other escaping unhurt. The daughter of Madame P * * *, a little girl between four and five years of age, was asleep in a room, part of the roof of which was blown down, she was taken out of bed and carried from the port to the Grand Place still asleep, neither the noise of the explosion, the falling ruins, nor the removal, having awoke her.

The total loss by this melancholy accident, proved to be one hundred and one killed, and thirteen wounded ; the cause of the explosion will probably for ever remain unknown ; part of the building was used as a manufactory of cartridges, and it is supposed that loose powder must have been collected in the cracks of the floor, and being ignited by a spark from a pipe, have communicated with the magazine. This, however, is mere conjecture, for, in this case, as in most others of

the same description, those to blame are generally the first to suffer. The escape of the greater part of Algiers from destruction was most providential, for if another magazine, which was in the immediate neighbourhood, containing several tons of gunpowder, had taken fire, three-fourths of the city must have been levelled with the ground, and the loss of life would have been enormous.

A traveller leaving, for the first time, the shores of Europe, and expecting to see, on landing at Algiers, an eastern city, would be much disappointed at finding himself in wide handsome streets, built on the model of those in a large provincial French town, with arcades, and shops filled with the latest Parisian fashions. It is only when he looks around upon the passing crowd, and marks the turban and the bernous, that he is reminded, he is sojourning in another quarter of the globe. This, however, only refers to the lower portion of the town, which has in great part been entirely rebuilt since the occupation ; the three principal streets are the Rues "de la Marine," which leads from the harbour to the Place de Gouvernement,

and those of Bab-Azoun and Bab-el-Oued, branching from thence at right angles, and connecting the two gates (after which they are named) at the north and south angles of the city ; branching off from these, are a multitude of dark, dirty passages, so narrow as scarcely to allow the passing of a couple of laden donkeys, and redolent with all imaginable filthy smells ; these are the remaining Moorish streets in the lower part of the town, and are now fast disappearing under the improving hands of speculators, one of the last epidemics that has afflicted Algeria having been a violent rage for building ; the disease has, however, latterly taken a new turn, a strong desire to make large fortunes by farming having been added to the former symptoms ; this complication of maladies will, it is to be feared, ere long lead to fatal results, particularly to those whose constitutions have been weakened by attacks of a similar nature in their native country.

In the afternoon we visited the upper town and the Kasbah. Starting from the Place we commenced the ascent, passing a large mosque, now converting into a Christian

Church ; the building in itself is handsome, and the requisite alterations and improvements are being executed in the Moorish style, with good taste. Near this, a little higher up, is the residence of the governor-general, with nothing remarkable in its exterior ; but the apartments, which are not permitted to be seen by strangers, are said to be magnificently fitted up.

From thence we ascended to the Kasbah, through a labyrinth of wretched streets, inhabited by the very dregs of the population, built without the slightest attempt at regularity, winding their devious course in almost inextricable confusion, the difficulty of threading them, being increased by the numerous blind alleys, and the striking likeness each house bears to its next door neighbour. Fortunately every street has its French name painted in large letters at the corner, the alleys marked "impasse," and each house numbered. The streets are, in many places, more contracted than in the lower town, and the upper stories of the houses generally projecting some feet over the lower, added to the numerous arches under which the road-

way passes, formed by houses built over and on both sides of the street, render them dark and gloomy ; and, in the hot weather, the stench produced by the decaying filth, so plentifully scattered about, must, in such confined situations, produce dreadful diseases, were it not for the healthy situation of the city, placed so favourably to catch every breath of air from the cooling surface of the sea.

Reaching at last the highest angle of the city, we entered the Kasbah (a word which, in Arabic, signifies a fortress, or citadel) from a small irregularly-shaped piece of ground, called by the French, Place des Victoires. Passing under an archway, the recesses in the sides of which were used by the Dey's troops as guard-rooms, we hastened at once to the ramparts. From hence we had a magnificent view ; below us was the city, having the appearance of a gigantic flight of steps, based on the sea, and gradually diminishing in width till they reached the point on which we were standing ; the harbour crowded with shipping, the graceful latteen sails of the Mediterranean contrast-

ing picturesquely with the clumsy funnels of the steamers ; the sea stretching as far as the eye can reach to the northward and eastward ; the fertile plain of the Meteedjah, extending from the foot of the heights behind Algiers to Cape Matifou, the extreme point of land to the east forming the Bay of Algiers. The large white building, about the centre of the bay, and situated a mile inland, is the Maison Carrée, for many years one of the most important posts in Algeria, but now rendered comparatively unimportant by the complete pacification of the Meteedjah.

The weather, which had been threatening for some time, did not permit us to dwell long on this splendid prospect, and descending from the walls, we proceeded to inspect the interior of the fortress. Within the walls were contained the palace and harem of the Dey, barracks for his household troops, upon whose fidelity his safety from the frequently-insurgent soldiery of the regency depended, the treasury, and principal magazine. The whole is now occupied as a barrack, and we were permitted to visit any part we wished.

We entered a handsome court to the right of the way leading from the outer gate, paved with marble, the second story, surmounted with spacious galleries, open to the inside, and connecting the various apartments on that floor, which were the private residence of the Dey. Although they, of course, have suffered greatly from their transformation into a barrack, they could never have been remarkable, either for beauty of decoration, or for size, in both of which qualities, many houses, the property of private individuals in the city, far surpass them.

These are now occupied as officers' quarters, and projecting from the gallery connecting them is a covered balcony of lattice work overhanging the court below. This small room is one of the principal objects of interest in the Kasbah, for within it was given the famous "coup de chasse-mouche," an event pregnant with consequences of such vital importance to the Dey and the regency. On the 27th of April, 1827, the eve of the feast of the Beyram, the diplomatic corps were, according to custom, presented to pay

their respects to the Dey. During the interview an angry discussion took place between the Dey and the French consul, which ended by the Dey in a passionate moment striking the consul in the face with his fan. To this blow the subsequent events that have taken place are to be referred ; it cost the Dey his throne, drove him an exile to die in a foreign land, caused the ruin of the Turkish dominion, which had endured for upwards of three hundred years, and in replacing it by an European and Christian government, must, sooner or later, work a most beneficial change in the condition of the northern coast of Africa, however dim and distant such a prospect may appear at present.

This room is now used as a poultry yard ; and, singularly enough, as we entered, a cock strutting on the deserted divan proclaimed his victory over some feebler rival by a triumphant crow, an appropriate emblem of the real state of affairs.

The harem, arranged in the same manner as the apartments of the Dey, formed a square, with this only difference, that instead of a court paved with marble, the interior

space was laid out as a garden, of which a few melancholy looking shrubs are now all that remain. Although scarcely larger than a room, and surrounded with lofty walls, it was the only place where the inmates were permitted to breathe the fresh air of heaven, the frequent visits to the baths and to the graves of relatives allowed to other women being forbidden to them.

On the left of the entrance is placed the grand magazine, a substantial building, surmounted by a dome : near it is a fountain, remarkable for the beauty and chasteness of its design, a canopy of marble, supported by twisted columns of the same material, and ornamented with arabesque patterns and verses from the Koran, sculptured in relief. Not far from this was the treasury, which, at the period of the capture of the city by the French, contained an enormous sum : what the total amount really was still remains a mystery. A thousand stories are current, even at the present day, imputing corrupt actions to many of the highest officers in the conquering army. These are but mere rumours and assertions, totally unsupported

by evidence, and probably owe their origin to the fact, that no one knows what became of the large sum stated by the official government accounts to have been shipped to France, to the amount of forty-three millions of francs. There is, however, but little doubt that it was employed by the ministry of Charles X. at the commencement of the revolution of July.

The total estimated value of the contents of the treasury, of the various articles of merchandise in the Dey's warehouses, and of the munitions of war found in the city, was nearly fifty-six millions, leaving a surplus, after paying all the expenses of the expedition, of upwards of seven millions. In France the most exaggerated accounts were believed of the enormous riches of Algiers, and of the peculations of the army, so that to prevent the importation of this imaginary plunder, the search of baggage arriving from Africa was in some instances conducted with such minuteness, that a coffin, containing the corpse of a young officer killed there, was opened, and the body searched for treasure.

The Dey's system of keeping accounts and storing his money was a very simple one. Wooden partitions divided the treasury into bins like a cellar, one for gold, another for silver, and so on, separating foreign and native coin : when money was to be paid in, the amount was thrown uncounted into the appropriate bin, and the disbursements made in the same style by taking out the sum required. Such also was the carelessness shown, that in one part, the walls still bear the impressions of coins, cast in at random, before the inner coating of plaster had had time to dry. A mosque, stables, warehouses, in which the Dey kept the wool and other articles received in kind as tribute, and domestic offices, were also contained within the enceinte of the Kasbah, which formed in itself a little city.

CHAPTER II.

Residence of the British Consul General—Terrace Roofs—Peeping—Marks of Lord Exmouth's visit—Plans—Arab Market—New Suburb—Battle of Isly—A Parisian Traveller and his Adventures—Mustapha Pacha—Chasseurs d'Afrique—Experimental Gardens—Produce—Cochineal—Moorish Café—Ride in the country.

LINGERING too long in these scenes of the by-gone power of the once-dreaded rulers of Algiers, we were obliged to hasten down to keep our appointment at the hospitable table of Mr. St. John, the British Consul General. Mr. St. John's residence in the city, which he only occupies during the winter and spring, is one of the finest remaining specimens of Moorish domestic architecture in Algiers. The street in which it is situated, as yet untouched by the levelling hand of improvement—narrow, dark, and dirty—

is a fair example of one of the principal streets previous to the Conquest.

The house, like every other, be it large or small, forms a square. The inner court, paved with marble, and a fountain, with flowers and shrubs in the centre, is surrounded with arcades, forming covered galleries two stories high, supported by spiral columns of white marble; a balustrade, beautifully carved in wood, with arabesque patterns, runs round the upper story, which is reached by a narrow staircase in the corner; the rooms are long and narrow, with their doors and windows opening upon the interior, so that the gallery forms the sole mode of communication from one apartment to another. Where the floors are not of marble, gaily painted tiles of coarse porcelain, are used in its place, and the walls are also lined with the same material for three or four feet from the ground.

Mr. St. John has had the good taste to preserve as much as possible of the Moorish style, and only to make such alterations as were necessary for comfort, such as fireplaces for burning coal, and replacing the

divans and cushions with English furniture. From the second floor a staircase in marble and porcelain leads up to the terraced roof, a delightful lounge in the cool of the evening, after the exhausting heats of a summer's day. Upon these terraces it was the custom for the women to appear shortly before sunset to enjoy the evening breezes, without veils, and frequently but slightly clad ; the men, by a sort of tacit agreement, not joining them till after dusk, on account of each house-top being overlooked by, and also overlooking the neighbouring premises. The infraction of this rule by the French officers on the first occupation of the city, nearly led, in some instances, to very serious results, the feeling of exasperation being much greater at seeing a man peaceably promenading on his own roof armed with a telescope, than that produced by the actual presence of an invading army within their walls.

Thus it is, that even a slight disregard of the habits and prejudices of a nation is more deeply felt than injuries. However, I do not think it is in the power of man to withstand the temptation of getting a distant

peep at the imprisoned beauties of the harem — beauties at least through the charms lent to them by imagination, and by the feelings impressed upon our minds in the days of childhood, by the wonders and romances of the Arabian nights.

The house still bears some marks of Lord Exmouth's visit in 1816, a cannon ball having passed through the side nearest the sea, and then hopping down stairs from step to step, broken each in its turn ; a discharge of grape shot has also written its name in very decided characters on a wall lined with arabesque tiles facing a window.

We spent a most agreeable evening, and the time was not only pleasantly but profitably passed, as our host kindly gave us his advice as to the plan we should follow in our future proceedings. He recommended us in the first place to leave Algiers in a day or two for the southward, visiting Bleedah, crossing the chain of the lesser atlas to Medeah, where the general commanding the district, to whom he would give us a letter of introduction, would inform us as to the state of the country, and probably facilitate

our seeing the Arab tribes, and other objects worthy of note. The weather also had changed for the better, after a long continuance of rain and snow, and was therefore likely to remain fine, and we should have ample time on our return, before the departure of the coasting steamer, to see the rest of the city and its environs.

Next morning we were up between five and six to attend the Arab market, held daily outside the gate Bab-azoun, for the sale of provisions, forage, and other country produce. Nearly all the articles for sale are brought on ass-back, and the immense loads carried by some of the most diminutive of these beasts of burthen, rendered it a matter of wonder how so much could be stowed on such a small space. The donkeys laden with forage from the Meteedjah, had the appearance of itinerant hay-stacks, rendering it also a matter of doubt when stationary, in which direction the head or tail might lay. Very few horses were to be seen, and those miserable looking brutes, hardly more pre-possessing than their dirty, ragged masters. A patient looking camel or two,

slouching along through the crowd, with a large basket on either side, gave variety to the scene.

As to the Arabs themselves, seen for the first time by a stranger in the land, it would be gross injustice to form any opinion of them by only seeing them here. Most of those who attend this market are from the immediate vicinity of Algiers, and having been for years in habits of constant intercourse with Europeans, may be well supposed to have lost a portion of their nationality, and to have also acquired some of the vices of civilization, without the virtues.

Having satisfied our curiosity at the market, we continued our walk through the new suburb rapidly rising on this side of the city, and consisting of houses built by some of the later colonists, in preference to being cooped up in the hot and narrow streets within the walls, or paying an enormous sum for an eligible site near the port.

After breakfast we went in search of some officers to whom we had letters of introduction, and also to prepare those things requisite for our journey which we had not pro-

cured at Marseilles. During our inquiries after one of the former, we had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of Colonel B., who had commanded one of the regiments at the battle of Isly ; at our request he gave us a description of the action, and I can hardly imagine a more magnificent sight than that of the 14th of August, 1844, when the front line of the Moroquine army, composed of twelve thousand cavalry, advanced to the charge, against the small but compact columns of the French infantry. The details of this action being so well known, I shall not repeat them, and it would be difficult to transfer to paper the account which we heard given “viva voce,” so graphically, and with so much spirit.

Among the various costumes and styles of dress seen in the streets of Algiers, none are so ridiculous as that of the European civilian, dressed “a l’Arabe,” some fine specimens of which we saw to-day. One of this “genus,” a wealthy shopkeeper from the Rue Chaussée, D’Antin, had, by his adventures a short time since, created some little amusement—enthusiastic on the subject of the new colony,

his thoughts by day had been for months of Algeria, and his dreams by night of ber-noussed warriors, fiery steeds, and bloody yataghans. At last, determined to see with his own eyes, he left his beloved Paris, and arrived safely in Algiers.

His first care was to procure a complete Arab dress, in which he sallied forth the morning after his arrival. He came in search of adventures, and he was soon gratified ; stalking along he accidentally hustled a couple of French soldiers, he was sworn at, thrashed, and rolled in the mud, as a "*S-cochon d'Arabe,*" lost his purse from having no pockets in his new garments, and was nearly kicked down stairs by the garçon of his hotel, for venturing to enter his own room.

Undismayed by these misadventures, he set out the following day, armed to the teeth, to ride to Bleedah, when, half way there, he was seized as a suspicious character, by two Arab gendarmes, for being armed without having a permit, and pretending not to understand Arabic, was disarmed and dismounted, his hands tied behind his back,

and fastened to his captors' stirrup he spent the night on the ground in a wretched hut, with a handful of cuscusoo for supper, and next morning was dragged into Algiers in broad daylight, half dead with fear and fatigue ; on being carried before the police he was instantly liberated, and taking advantage of the first packet, returned to France, after having seen more of life in Algeria in a few days, than many who had spent the same number of years in the colony.

Having procured horses, such as they were, for the afternoon, at the reasonable rate of four francs (the whole day being only six), and Goltz having joined us, we rode out at the Bab-azoun Gate, and, passing the fort of the same name, continued by the road near the sea, leaving the beautiful country-houses and luxuriant gardens of Mustapha Pacha to our right. On an extensive piece of ground, lying between the sea and the foot of the hill, we remained some time, watching the drill of some young soldiers of the Chasseurs d'Afrique, two regiments of cavalry raised especially for

service in Africa, and considered the favourite corps of that army, for all who are desirous of opportunities for distinguishing themselves. They are recruited by volunteers from the cavalry of the line, and must have served a certain time with their regiments. They are well mounted, and admirably armed and equipped for the services required of them.

The horses, as far as possible, are those of the country, and the number bred not being at present sufficient, there is some difficulty in procuring them. A late regulation will, however, partly remedy this, each tribe having had a certain portion of their tribute commuted into furnishing a horse every year for the government service ; this source will, it is calculated, yield about eight hundred horses per annum ; large numbers have also, at different times, been imported from the neighbouring Regency of Tunis, where the horses are not only lower in price, but more attention being paid to the breeding, they are of a superior description. The export of horses of the government standard is also prohibited, and the rule so strictly

adhered to, that even General Officers have some trouble, in obtaining permission to take a favourite charger out of the country.

The arms of a Chasseur d'Afrique consist, of a long carabine of small bore, a sword, and pistols ; their saddlery plain, with a very small valise. The uniform on service, is a light blue jacket with yellow facings, red overalls, strapped with leather, and a low forage-cap, diminishing in size to the crown, with a broad horizontal peak. The uniform of the officers differs from that of the men only in having the breast of the jacket barred with black silk cord. The effect of the whole is good, and from the absence of all useless ornament, and the adaptation of the clothing and accoutrements to the desultory warfare in which they are so constantly engaged, their appearance, either singly, or in line, is soldier-like and active.

These two regiments have been eminently useful, distinguishing themselves in almost every action that has been fought in Africa ; and so much so, that a record of their services would be a history of the war from the date of their formation.

Three miles from Algiers, we reached the "Café des Platanes," so called from some magnificent plane-trees overshadowing a fountain and a Moorish café. Opposite are the government experimental gardens, established for the purpose of acclimatising such foreign vegetable productions as may suit the climate, and then, by distribution among the colonists, introducing those likely to succeed into the various districts. The superintendent, seeing that we were strangers, conducted us over the gardens, and pointed out the experiments now in progress. The soil is light and sandy, with a mixture of recent shells; water is led by small canals to every part, and both lime and manure are plentiful. Great care and attention is paid to it, and when labour is more abundant, and the security of the farmers in the rich valleys, and on the slopes of the Atlas, increased, it will become an establishment of great value. The sugar-cane, indigo, banana, American, Egyptian, and Indian cotton, including even the coloured variety from Nankin; yams, and sweet potatoes—

which latter have not, however, succeeded well—are all here.

The most interesting experiment at present going on is the cultivation of the cactus, and the rearing of the cochineal insect upon it. It had been tried some few years ago, and had failed, probably from want of care ; however, it now bids fair to become one of the most valuable productions of the colony. Last year, some fresh insects and plants of the cactus arrived from South America ; in the autumn they had thriven so well that they were enabled, after reserving a sufficient breeding stock, to prepare a sample which was pronounced to nearly equal the best South American. But little labour or capital is required for the cultivation. A succession of the cactus is easily procured, by merely sticking a leaf into the ground. An occasional cleaning at the bottom keeps the plant healthy ; a dozen or so of the insects are then enclosed in a little wicker-work case, the interstices not being large enough to allow of the escape of the full-grown insect ; this is placed in the fork

formed by the junction of two leaves, or a nick is made, and in a few days the plant will be found covered with the young, so minute as to be hardly visible to the eye. Two crops can be taken each year, one in the commencement of summer, and the other towards the end of autumn. When they are of a sufficient size, the leaves are gathered, and the insects carefully brushed off over a cloth, sprinkled with vinegar and water, dried quickly in the sun, sorted according to size, and are then fit for market. During the winter a small shed is required over the plants, upon which the insects are preserved for breeding stock. The extent of the gardens, including the plots of ground set apart for cotton and cochineal, is about forty-five acres.

Whilst I was engaged taking a hasty sketch of the café, with its fountain and trees, my companions were seated on a mat under the arcade, drinking coffee, made, as it always is, with the grounds in it, and playing draughts with a sedate old Moor, whose blushing nose, despite his venerable beard and the gravity of his demeanour,

betrayed him as one preferring the wines of France to the commands of his prophet.

After riding along the shore for some little distance, we turned to our right, and ascending the rising ground, inclined in a westerly direction, passing near the site of the model farm, which, turning out a failure, has been for some time abandoned ; and then coming upon the old road from Algiers to Bleedah, returned homewards by the pretty village of Ber-el-Kadem. The road, after descending the heights above Mustapha Pacha, passes through a succession of gardens and country houses, among which the summer residence of the Deys, now that of the governor-general, stands as conspicuous for its beauty as are the immense barracks in its vicinity for their ugliness.

CHAPTER III.

Departure for Bleedah—Beautiful Views—Fort l'Empereur—Expedition of Charles V.—Its Failure—Curious History of some Artillery—Landing of the French Troops in 1830—Battle of Stawelli—Siege of Fort l'Empereur—Deli Ibrahim—Agricultural Improvements—Colonists—Scarcity of Wood—Saint Ferdinand—Donéra—Bouffarick—The Zouaves — Bleedah — A Fortunate Bankrupt — Orange Groves.

FOLLOWING the advice we had received from Mr. St. John, we started this morning, the 12th of March, in the diligence, at half-past seven, for Bleedah ; trusting to be able there to purchase or hire horses for our contemplated excursion into the interior.

Leaving Algiers by the Bab-el-oued gate, a capital road, constructed by the troops, winds up the steep ascent between the ancient walls of the city and the modern fortifications of the northern side, now in progress.

As the heavy laden diligence slowly toiled up the hill, we had ample time to admire the beauty of the prospect, each turn offering ever varying views of the city, the picturesque slopes of the Boudjariah clothed with wood, and gay with the white roofs of the country houses rising in the midst of their gardens, the deep blue waters of the Mediterranean, and the horizon gradually expanding as we mounted higher, discovering the snowy sail of some distant vessel glistening in the rays of the morning sun, and perchance bearing from their native land those who, self-exiled, flying from poverty and misfortune, would receive with joy the sunny welcome of this their future home, and hail with delight this lovely morning, as the emblem of happier, brighter days to come.

Half a mile beyond the Kasbah, the road passes under the walls of Fort l'Empereur, a memorable spot on two occasions in the history of Algiers. Where the fort now stands, Charles V. established his camp and batteries in his disastrous attempt made upon the city in 1541. The expedition was undertaken in the month of October, much

too late in the year for naval operations in the Mediterranean, and it was to the elements that the defeat of the Spanish army was owing, and not to the strength of the enemy, who, notwithstanding the high tone assumed by Muley-Hassan, the governor, were almost unprepared to resist the force brought against them. The troops were landed, and the siege was progressing favourably, when, on the evening of the second day, a terrific storm arose, and, continuing all night, raging with the utmost fury, the fleet was dispersed, many vessels driven from their anchorage were cast on shore and totally lost, and it was with the greatest difficulty that the remnant of the fleet, after losing a hundred and fifty-five vessels, and eight thousand men, succeeded in making Cape Matifou.

Nor on shore did the army suffer less, exposed without shelter to the dreadful storm, drenched with rain, numbed with the cold, and their ammunition damaged, they were not able to withstand the attack of the Algerines, who, well protected within their walls from the weather, and animated

with the belief that the tempest was an especial interposition in their behalf, sallied in the morning from the city, headed by Muley-Hassan—a man of the most daring courage, possessed of great abilities, and bred up in the hardy school of the two Barbarossas.

The Spanish army suffered dreadfully, and a retreat being the only means of preserving the troops, now destitute of everything, they moved the following day towards Cape Matifou, which was reached after enduring a terrible march of four days, constantly harassed by the victorious enemy, and undergoing the extremes of hunger and fatigue.

Some of the guns abandoned by Charles V. on this occasion have a rather remarkable history. Originally French, they were captured by the imperial army from Francis I., at the battle of Pavia: forming part of the artillery train of Charles V. in Africa, they were taken by the Algerines. Mounted on the Kasbah they have served to defend Algiers against the various European squadrons that have attacked the city, and were

finally recaptured by the French in 1830, after an interval of three hundred and five years.

After this signal defeat of the Spanish army, Muley-Hassan, perceiving that the position which Charles had taken up on the heights commanding the Kasbah and the city, would, in the event of any future attack, be again occupied by the enemy, ordered a fort to be built on the spot, and called, in commemoration of his victory, Sultan Calassy, or the Fort of the Emperor.

Strengthed by the successive Dey's, more, however, for the purpose of overawing their own subjects, always ripe for revolt, than to guard against foreign invasion, it grew, by degrees into a place of considerable strength, and in 1830 consisted of a central tower surmounted by an enceinte nearly square, with a bastion at each angle; the fort was well supplied with artillery and ammunition; its garrison was composed of two thousand three hundred picked men, under the command of the Khasnadji (the minister of finance), and excited by the exhortations of the Mufti, they swore to defend it to the last against

the enemies of their country and of their religion.

The French army having effected a landing on the 14th of June, unopposed, except by some skirmishers at the promontory of Sidi Ferruch, twelve miles to the westward of Algiers, where they had formed a strong entrenched camp; had fought and gained, after a severe contest, the battle of Stawelli, with the loss of upwards of 500 killed and wounded. On the 29th, the heights of the Boudjarah were taken possession of, and Fort l'Empereur regularly invested. The siege was admirably carried on by General La Hitte. On the 4th of July, the fire of the French batteries opened with such effect that in the course of a few hours, despite the courage and daring efforts of the garrison, the guns on the walls were dismounted, the interior had become a heap of ruins, from the fire of the mortars, and a breach, almost practicable, had been made in the northern face of the west bastion.

Under these circumstances, the remnant of the garrison, fearfully reduced in numbers, resolved upon abandoning the fort, and

retreating into the city, leaving only a few men, who preferring rather to perish on the spot they had sworn to defend, than to fly before their Christian enemy, had determined to fire the magazine. Accordingly, about noon, the French batteries still continuing their fire, and the troops waiting, impatiently, the moment when the breach might be reported practicable, a terrific explosion took place—the fort had been blown up, and when the cloud of smoke and dust had cleared off, the western face of the work was nought but a heap of shapeless ruins, an immense breach.

Negotiations were immediately commenced, which soon ended in the almost unconditional surrender of the Dey and the city. Thus is Fort l'Empereur the monument of victory in the days of prosperity, and the scene of the closing struggle—inscribed in the brightest and in the darkest pages of the history of Algiers.

The road, after passing the fort, still continues, for some miles, on the ridge of rising ground between the plains of the Meteedjah to the eastward, and the sea to the west.

Farm-houses are numerous, and the first village on the route, Deli-Ibrahim, is a rising place, with good houses, shops, and a church ; and interesting, from being the earliest settlement in the country, having been established, shortly after the occupation, by a band of German colonists, who are now reaping the reward of their perseverance and industry, having undergone all those misfortunes that usually attend a newly-established colony. Not only have they suffered in life and property, from the frequent attacks of the Arabs, but from the greater evil of famine—a vast number having died one year from actual starvation, after a failure of their crops.

The soil in the neighbourhood is excellent, producing the grain, fruits, and vegetables of Europe of a quality equal, and often superior. The extent of land at present under tillage is not great, owing partly to the scarcity of labour, and partly to the unsettled state of the country until within the last two or three years, during which period the agricultural colonists have made more progress than in the preceding ten. Com-

fortable farm-houses, with stables and offices, have been erected, gardens and fields enclosed, and roads made, connecting the farms with the highway ; European ploughs, and implements are seen in the fields, with carts and waggons, made after the national pattern of the French, German, or Spanish proprietor. Herds of cattle, and numerous flocks of sheep grazing on the hill-sides, are pleasing evidences of present prosperity.

Were it not for an occasional party of Arabs going to market with the country produce, or returning from the city, it would be difficult to imagine, from the surrounding scene, that you are travelling in another quarter of the globe ; the languages of Europe are heard on every side, at each turn familiar faces meet the eye, the peasant of the Midi, the discharged soldier, the clumsy Alsacian, and the unmistakable air of the Parisian *badaud*, the Spaniard, at home so idle and lazy, here an industrious colonist, who, in leaving his native land, has seemingly shaken off the hereditary sloth which forms so prominent a feature in the Spanish character, the Maltese, travelling

from village to village, with his little stock of merchandise, the Pole, and the Italian, are each known at once ; and who is there that would not recognise at a glance the group at the door of yonder farm ? the mother, stout, homely, and neatly dressed, knitting in the doorway, every now and then restoring order with a sharp word, accompanied by a smile, that almost cancels it, among a happy noisy crowd of little ones, whose flaxen hair, light blue eyes, and round fair cheeks, so delicately white, would teach you to despise the power of an African sun, were it not for a second look at the bronzed features of the mother, across whose brow a narrow stripe, generally covered by her cap, nearly as white as that of the infants at her feet, shows what she was, now is, and they will be ; the well-kept garden, the neat enclosures, all stamp them as of a kindred nation to our own, and the sturdy figure ploughing in the adjoining field, with the curling smoke from his beloved pipe issuing from his mouth, in puffs as regular as if he were labouring on the banks of his own Rhine, prove that the German, where'er he be,

forgets neither the habits nor the industry of his early home.

Owing to the wants of the numerous camps and military posts, that at various times have been formed in the neighbourhood, there is scarcely any wood to be found, and in some places not even brushwood ; this promising to become a serious inconvenience, measures are being taken to remedy it, by obliging each settler to plant, in the course of the first three years, a certain number of trees, proportionate to the extent of his allotment, and avenues have been planted, at the expense of government, at the sides of the public roads. The trees are at present too young to make much show, but, in the course of a few years, the general appearance of the country in the vicinity of Algiers will be greatly improved ; the soil and the climate are both favourable to the growth of large timber, which is proved, by the few trees that here and there have been allowed to remain, and the healthy appearance of the young plants.

Half way between Deli - Ibrahim and Douera, and three miles to the right of the

road, is seen the village of Saint Ferdinand —the result of an experiment tried in 1843 by Colonel Marengo. The military convicts were placed at his disposal, and he employed them during the winter in clearing the ground and preparing it for cultivation. A village was also built, so that in the spring all was ready to receive the colonists, substantial houses erected for each family, and the laborious and expensive work of bringing an uncultivated tract of land into a fit state spared to them. A small sum was to be paid by each on entering into possession, and the balance by annual instalments. The period is, at present, too early to state with certainty the result of the plan, but the new village is flourishing, and the inhabitants having escaped the principal hardships and struggles attendant on the first year, ought to have a much better chance of success than existed amongst those who toiled unaided along the rugged road, that leads the colonist to comfort and independance.

Passing on the left the village of Baba-Hassan, also founded in 1843, we arrived in Douëra, a large straggling place, surrounded

by a loop-holed wall. Here we stopped to breakfast, and benefitted by the nationality of the landlady, who was so pleased with our German fellow traveller, that she gave us the best the house afforded, and waited upon us herself. The road shortly after leaving Douëra descends into the plain, and is carried in almost a straight line through a level country to Bleedah.

It was now near noon, the sun was bright, and being closely packed in the diligence, we were not sorry when on arriving at Boufarick, a large military station four leagues from Bleedah, we deposited several of our passengers, amongst whom was a soldier belonging to the Zouaves, two companies of which regiment were quartered here. The Zouaves were intended by Marshal Clausel, who raised the corps in 1830, to act the same part in Africa that our Sepoys play in Asia, and were accordingly at first composed entirely of natives, taking their name from a warlike tribe in the vicinity of Constantine. In a short time, however, the enlistment of Frenchmen into the force was encouraged, and at the present time there are but few

natives, and their numbers are reducing every year.

The uniform is most picturesque,—very large wide trousers of red cloth fastened at the knee, strong leather leggings, laced at the side from the knee to the ankle, shoes, and white gaiters; the jacket is of blue cloth, edged with red, and an arabesque pattern of the same colour on either breast; the waist-coat is of the same material, and having no opening in the front, is either slipped on over the head or buttoned at the side; both jacket and waistcoat are cut low, without collars, leaving the neck bare; a blue sash is wound several times round the waist, and the head-dress is a crimson cap, with blue tassel, and a long handkerchief twisted round converts it into a turban.

Their arms are a musket, bayonet, and short heavy sword. The cartouche-box is carried round the waist, and the bayonet is attached to the right side, the sword of course being on the left, a very light knapsack, and a short blue grey cloak, with a hood, complete a most comfortable, soldier-like, and picturesque uniform.

The Zouaves being employed on every expedition, and from the nature of the war in this country, the light troops having more frequent opportunities given to distinguish themselves than their brethren of the line, the three battalions are the same favourite service for the infantry that the Chasseurs d'Afrique are for the cavalry, and it has often occurred that non-commissioned officers volunteer from the line to serve in the Zouaves as privates.

As we drew nearer to the range of the lesser Atlas, what was apparently lost in grandeur was gained in beauty, as the numerous valleys and water courses that seam the sides of the mountains became more distinctly visible ; each dark spot, that at a distance seemed but a shadow, now appeared as woodland, bright with all the colours of the early spring ; the white dome of a Marabout, perched on a rock half way to the summit, overlooked the plain from the midst of an ancient clump of trees, the patches of snow still lay on the heights, and at the entrance of a valley on the verge

of the plain, half hidden by its gardens and orange groves, stood the town of Bleedah.

At half-past two we entered Bleedah, the last two or three miles as we approached the town shewing a great improvement, both in the soil and in its cultivation, when compared to the parts of the Meteedjah, near Bouffarick ; attempts, also, had been made in one or two places to cut open drains, but there was not a sufficient number of them to do much good.

Our first care on our arrival was to secure horses, and, thanks to the officer in charge of the Arab department, we were promised that horses for ourselves, a mule for the baggage, and an Arab guide should be in readiness at the hotel at five o'clock the next morning. Having thus satisfactorily arranged our affairs, we walked through the town, where, however, there is nothing worthy of note. The walls have in some places been rebuilt, and in others repaired, by the French, a "Place d'Armes" has been laid out, and a broad handsome street is building, leading from it to the Algiers gate of the town.

The native portion of the town, built of clay, is in a sadly ruinous condition ; in 1825 an earthquake destroyed the greater part of it, Bleedah then numbered fifteen thousand inhabitants, many of whom perished in the ruins. Partially recovered from this disaster, there were but five thousand at the period of the French invasion, and now, from having been the seat for years of constant warfare, the natives hardly number as many hundreds as, twenty years ago, they did thousands.

The European population is greatly on the increase, and, leaving the troops out of the calculation, will shortly outnumber the natives. This is owing to the great natural advantages of the situation of the town, abundance of excellent water, a fertile soil, and a healthy climate, in addition to its being well placed for the purpose of commerce with the interior, and forming a link between the sea-port of Algiers, and country beyond the Atlas.

Speculation in land has been carried on in this neighbourhood to a great extent, in proof of which the following circumstance

was related to me by a person who vouched for its truth. Some years ago a colonist, who had brought over from France but a small capital, became one of the earliest settlers in Bleedah, and invested his money in the purchase of a piece of land in the neighbourhood. The disasters of 1839, when Abd-el-Kader overran the Meteedjah, destroyed the value of his property, and then turning his energies in another direction, he borrowed money, speculated largely, failed for a very considerable sum, and ended by absconding from his creditors and taking refuge in Spain, leaving behind him only this petty farm, of no value.

Owing to some legal difficulties, the land remained for a long period unsold, speculation had again commenced, and when, a short time ago, it was brought into the market, the sale produced so much, that, after paying the creditors principal and interest, and defraying all legal expenses, a considerable surplus remains for the runaway, when he chooses to return and claim it.

Taking with us our guns—not, however, for protection, as there is nothing to fear in

the environs, but thinking we might fall in with a covey of partridges in the course of our ramble among the hills—we left the town by the gate nearest to the Atlas, taking the course of the Oued-el-Kebir up the valley by which it descends into the plain, turning several mills in its progress. To the ample supply of water afforded by this little stream, does Bleedah owe its luxuriant gardens and groves of orange-trees, said to produce the finest oranges in the world. Those we tasted here, although not gathered at the proper season, were delicious.

Formerly, the plantations of fruit-trees, principally oranges, lemons, and olives, were the chief source of wealth to the inhabitants, but the number of acres cleared by the axes and saws of the French pioneers, round the walls of the town, brought poverty upon many. This destruction of fruit-trees—wanton and barbarous though it may seem to be—was, in this case, absolutely necessary ; the orchards at the very foot of the walls, gave shelter to the Arabs, who, hidden from the sight of the French sen-

tries, fired with impunity at every man that showed himself.

After a pleasant ramble of three hours, we returned to our hotel, where a dinner, as well cooked, and as good as we could have got in France—out of Paris—finished the labours of the day ; and full of pleasureable anticipations of what the morrow and its successors were to bring forth, retired to bed at a reasonable hour.

CHAPTER IV.

Leave Bleedah—Our party, horses, and accoutrements—A canteen—Cross the Cheffea—Military road and encampment—Engineering difficulties—Magnificent scenery of the Pass—The ascent—Strata—Extensive view—Arrive at Medeah—Description of Medeah—Aqueduct—Hotels—General Marey—Pet lion—Morning walk—Soldier's gardens—Arab horses—Menagerie.

NEXT morning, at five o'clock, the “garçon,” more punctual than the generality of his kind, awoke us with the news that the horses and guide were waiting.

It was nearly seven o'clock before we were ready to set forth, and the first view of our gallant steeds was anything but satisfactory. They were not bigger than ponies; starved, miserable-looking animals, who appeared hardly able to put one foot before the

other, it seemed quite cruel to mount them. The saddles and bridles, old, torn, and mended, with packthread, did not set off the animals to advantage; but we had one circumstance to be proud of—the most fastidious eye that ever criticised a turn-out in the park could not have denied that our horses and our saddlery were in perfect keeping.

The most respectable of the party was our guide—a strapping, good-tempered Arab, weighing some twelve or thirteen stone—who, after having arranged our baggage on the back of the mule in a couple of panniers, placed himself on the top of all, with a telescope slung over one shoulder, and the mountain-barometer over the other. As we were not to arrive at Medeah until the afternoon, we carried provisions with us to breakfast on the road. The bread being baked in the form of a circle, was, for the convenience of carriage, strung on a rope, and fastened on the pack-saddle of the mule. This arrangement suited our horses admirably, two of them rushed upon the mule, and before we saw

what they were about, a couple of loaves had disappeared.

Besides our three selves, our party was increased by two Prussian officers, who only intended going as far as Medeah, and returning the next day, and a French officer travelling on duty. The commissariat stores having been replenished after the loss they had suffered, and our guide becoming impatient, we started at half-past seven, with a crowd of dirty boys at our heels, who had collected to witness our departure.

For five miles the road skirts the northern bank of the Oued-el-Kebir, which runs parallel with the mountains until it falls into the Cheeffa, near the point where it escapes from the confined valley to which it gives its name. Crossing the former stream a little above the junction, we came to a small wooden shed on the bank of the Cheeffa, to which the owner was putting the finishing touches ; a tri-coloured flag waved from the gable, and a sign chalked on a fragment of a barrel, informed the traveller that the newly established canteen was dedicated to "*L'armée d'Afrique.*"

We were fortunate enough to find that the river was fordable without danger, a point on which our guide had expressed some doubt, and which, if determined in the negative, would have obliged us to cross in a boat kept for the purpose ; swimming our horses, and then bearing away to the westward, we must have crossed the mountains by the Col de Mouzaïa, the only other pass in this portion of the Atlas, and three hours longer than the route by the valley of the Cheeffa. Like all rivers that rise in the midst of mountains, the stream increases with extraordinary rapidity after rain or snow, and before the boat was placed at this point by order of the government, many lives had been lost through ignorance and unwarrantable temerity.

Crossing the river, and keeping due south, we ascended the western bank for two or three miles by an excellent road, entirely the work of the troops, from the surveys and plans of the officers of engineers. The valley began to narrow by degrees as we advanced, the brushwood grew thicker, and there was just sufficient space for the river and the road. Turning the shoulder of the

hill, we arrived at the encampment of one of the battalions working at the road ; placed in an amphitheatre formed by a sudden bend of the river, the tents were intermingled with neatly constructed huts, made of green boughs, so interwoven that the leaves and small twigs formed a thatch on the exterior, not only pleasing to the eye, but impervious to the weather. The officers' tents were placed on the higher part of the camp, and the canteen by the side of the road was distinguished from its less aspiring neighbours by its wooden roof and a calico tri-colour.

The men employed on this duty receive seventy-five centimes additional pay per diem, and during the winter and spring, as the work is not hard, it is rather preferred by the troops to garrison duty. During the summer and autumn months the works are suspended on account of the unhealthiness of the climate, and also because the military operations, which generally commence in May, furnish ample employment for the troops.

Passing the camp, where the completed road ends, we entered the narrowest part of

the valley, and for two hours traversed a deep glen of the most romantic beauty. Two years ago it was scarcely possible for a single pedestrian to pass, and it was only with almost incredible labour that the engineer officer succeeded in doing so; wading in the river the greater part of the distance, and toiling along the perpendicular faces of the rocks, which, in many places, were so overgrown with thickly matted underwood as to be impenetrable without the use of the axe,—he arrived at the upper end, without shoes, and with scarce a rag of clothing left on his back.

With the aid of gunpowder, a rough track has been made close to the river, at present just wide enough to form a horse road, but which, when completed, will be a monument of engineering skill that will bear comparison with the Alpine roads of Europe. If the country continues quiet, it will be finished in about two years. On either hand rise the perpendicular sides of the mountains worn by the action of the water into a thousand fantastic shapes,—huge masses of rock fringed with the luxuriant vege-

tation that springs from every fissure. Each spot, each little ravine that retains sufficient earth, is green with the wild laurel, the juniper, the dwarf oak, and the olive, with here and there some tree of a larger growth that has withstood the storm, firmly planted in its more sheltered nook. The oleander flourishes on each little gravelly bed by the side of the river, and a variety of shrubs and flowering plants, with a profusion of lavender in full bloom, grow on every vacant spot.

At our feet, the river, slightly swollen and discoloured by the melting snow, rushed as it were, painfully through its contracted bed, foaming around the misshapen masses that detached from the rocks above, impede, but cannot check its course. Nor do the highest summits of the Atlas omit to send their tribute to add to the beauty of the scenery. Countless streams pour down their sides, and reaching the edge of the valley, fall in cascades from rock to rock till they join the river. At one point of view, where the rocks are steepest and the vegetation most beautiful, five are visible at once. The finest, falls from a precipice of 300 feet,

leaping from ledge to ledge, here and there for a moment concealed among the under-wood, appearing and re-appearing broken into a hundred streamlets that trickle over the mossy surface of the rocks, like threads of silver, until again united by some broader ledge, they together seek the stream beneath.

At noon a halt of an hour was made, to feed our horses and ourselves ; the morning, which had been dull and threatening rain, had given place to a fine afternoon, bright though cold ; another half hour's ride carried us out of the valley of the Cheeffa, we having forded the river thirteen times since crossing it in the morning.

The real ascent of the lesser Atlas now commenced ; the road, which had hitherto followed the course of the running water, now became a winding path cut in the face of the mountain through brushwood and dwarfed trees rarely exceeding ten feet in height. At the southern entrance of the valley we passed a solitary farmhouse, and near it, several limestone quarries that had been opened by the French ; the lime seemed of an excellent quality. The

strata on the banks of the river had consisted almost entirely of clay slate, and as we ascended, was replaced by a coarse-grained sandstone containing a quantity of fossil shells.

After surmounting the first ascent, we crossed an extensive plateau covered with cattle and goats, grazing under the charge of a couple of Arab boys; several uninclosed patches of cultivated ground were also seen at intervals. Another hill, rising before us, still remained to be climbed; and although not very steep, the road was bad. When once on the summit, we were well repaid by the magnificent prospect.

Taking a retrospective glance over our two days' journey, east and west nothing was to be seen, save mountain beyond mountain, as far as the eye could reach; to the southward, looking through the gap formed by the Cheeffa, was the broad plain of the Meteedjah, bounded by the hills to the westward of Algiers: and beyond all, the dimly defined horizon of the Mediterranean.

From hence a short descent brought us

into Medeah, where we arrived at half-past three o'clock, our horses not very tired, having carried us the nine leagues much better than could have been supposed from their wretched appearance at starting.

Immediately on our arrival, having fulfilled the travellers first duty of seeing our horses looked after, and leaving them to enjoy their unaccustomed treat of a full allowance of barley, we sallied forth to deliver Mr. St. John's letter to General Marey, and not finding him at home, wandered about the town until dusk.

Medeah, the capital of the province of Tittery, and the residence of a Bey under the Turkish rule, is now the head quarters of a subdivision of the French army, under the command of a major-general, whose authority extends to the borders of the Great Sahara Desert. It was founded by the Romans, and the situation is well chosen. The town, placed on the extremity of a sand-stone ridge shelving abruptly on three sides, is easily defended; in the midst of the Atlas, 3200 feet above the level of the sea, the climate is healthy, and the soil fertile.

From its position at the southern entrance of the important pass of the Col de Mouzaïa, and the influence which the possession of the town would give over the powerful tribes inhabiting the surrounding country, it was one of the first places coveted by the French. Taken in November, 1830, it was abandoned at the end of six weeks ; in June, the following year, it was again seized and occupied for a few days, and it was not until May, 1840, that it was finally taken possession of, after some sharp fighting, by a force under the command of the Duc d'Orléans.

As at Algiers and Bleedah, the destruction of the Arab streets is going on, and French buildings are rising in their place ; the only structure of consequence yet finished is the military hospital in the upper part of the town, erected in a fine airy situation, and a conspicuous object for miles around. The streets are narrow, dirty, and encumbered with the ruins of houses, pulled down on account of the contemplated improvements : stone is the building material used in place of mud, and owing to the prevalence of heavy

rains, the flat terrace is superseded by sloping roofs covered with tiles. Higher up the town the remains of the Roman walls are plainly visible, and in clearing the ground for new buildings Roman foundations are constantly uncovered; a few coins and portions of inscriptions of no value are all the relics that have been found.

Making the circuit of the ancient walls we descended into the valley to examine the most striking feature of the town, an aqueduct of two tiers of arches, which we had passed on the right hand in entering. Spanning the low ground, and connecting a neighbouring hill with the central portion of the place, it still supplies a copious stream of water. It was the work of a Bey of Tlemcen more than two centuries and a half ago, and although of great magnitude, it is more picturesque than useful, as several springs of water of a superior quality rise in the lower part of the town, and an enemy powerful enough to seize them would be equally able to cut through the channel of the aqueduct. A tradition exists that it was built by Christian prisoners, in which case it is not

improbable that the workmen may have been some of the captives taken at the period of the ill-fated expedition of Charles the Fifth.

Returning to the inn, which we found tolerably comfortable, and certainly improved since last year, if we may judge by the account of a French traveller, who writing of Medeah, says—“On a déjà plusieurs cafés avec l'inévitable billard, et deux hôtels où le travail est divisé, car l'un loge et l'autre nourrit; les chambres n'y sont pas encore tout à fait meublées, car le charpentier n'a pas encore achevé l'escalier qui y monte. On y a oublié une certaine faïence très-utile, mais il y a déjà des miroirs.”

After dinner, Captain Martenot, General Marey's aid-de-camp, called upon us with an invitation from the general to visit him in the evening, when he would make such arrangements as might be necessary, in furtherance of our wishes to see the country. We were most kindly received by the general, who, on learning the time we had to spare, sketched out a route for us, far exceeding in interest any practicable one that we had ventured to trace out for ourselves. We were to

commence with a boar-hunt, leaving Medeah the next day, so as to arrive on the ground in the afternoon, and hunt on the succeeding morning ; from thence we were to proceed to Boghar, the most advanced French post overlooking the Little Sahara ; make an excursion into it, if our time served, and return by a different route to Medeah, visiting the various tribes both going and returning.

During the evening we learnt much that was interesting concerning the Arabs from the General, who is more intimately acquainted with the Arab character, and with their manners and customs, than perhaps any other officer in the French service. For several years commandant of the Spahis (the Arab cavalry in the pay of the French), he lived among them, adopting their dress, and both writing and speaking Arabic fluently ; he is thus able to communicate with the tribes under his government without the medium of an interpreter.

On our asking some questions about a lion that we had heard belonged to him, he said he would introduce us at once, and, turning to his servant, desired him to bring

up Sultan. In a few minutes the door opened and the lion entered the room, the man only leading him by a tuft of his mane. He was a magnificent animal, two years old, and full grown, all but his mane, which although only a foot long, made, nevertheless, a respectable appearance ; he did not seem to care about our being strangers, but walking about the room like a large dog, permitted us to take liberties with him, such as patting him, shaking a paw, and making him exhibit his teeth and claws. He showed, however, a marked predilection in favour of his old acquaintances, and laying down before them, turned on his back to be scratched.

After a scratch or two, he began to yawn, and was fairly settling himself for a nap, when a cigar was puffed in his face—a proceeding he evidently did not approve of—Rising in a hurry, curling up his lips, and wrinkling his nose, he exposed to view a splendid set of teeth—a sure sign that he was not pleased. A hearty sneeze seemed to restore him to good temper ; and bearing no malice, he returned a friendly pat, bestowed upon him by Captain Martenot, who

had been the aggressor, by rubbing his head caressingly against his knees.

Next morning, meeting Captain Martenot in the Place d'Armes, by appointment, we visited the portions of the town not viewed the previous day. Outside the southern gate a daily market is held, during the early hours of the morning, by the Arabs; it differed but little from that formerly described at Algiers, except that the donkeys were much smaller, they not exceeding in size a full-grown Newfoundland dog, whilst the men, of a superior race, were many of them strikingly handsome, with a thoroughbred air, very unlike the mongrel aspect of the Arabs of the Meteedjah.

Further on, a few minutes' walk from the gate, in a little valley abundantly watered, are the gardens of the garrison. Each regiment or each battalion has its appointed piece of ground, which again divided into as many lots as there are companies, supplies the whole with vegetables. The men either work in the garden in turn, or those who understand and prefer it are relieved by their comrades of a certain portion of the

ordinary duties in exchange for their labour. Here, as at other places I have since visited, the ground in the occupation of the troops was in a high state of culture, and superior both in produce and neatness of arrangement, to the gardens of the civilians ; and when the two lay side by side, enjoying the same advantages as to soil and climate, no one could mistake which was the soldiers' and which the settlers'.

In many of our own colonies, and even at home, this system might be followed with beneficial results to our troops ; for, putting aside the addition the produce would make to the comforts of the men, any employment or amusement that would tend to keep the soldier out of the canteen or public-house during his leisure hours, and there are many on whom it would have that effect, must be advantageous.

Returning from the gardens, we entered a small mosque near the Place d'Armes, which has been converted into a church ; the gay decorations of the Roman Catholic altar, the gift of the Queen when the Duc d'Aumale was commanding at Medeah, contrast some-

what strangely with the simplicity of the walls, ornamented alone with verses from the Koran. Calling, in our way to the new Hospital, upon an officer of the garrison who devotes his spare time to the study of natural history, we were permitted to examine his collection, which included many rare specimens, and was especially rich in the aquatic birds that resort to the numerous lakes and marshes of Algeria; a large eagle, killed the preceding day, attracted our attention by his beauty, and two rams' heads, one with four and the other with six horns, although common, had a singular appearance to eyes only accustomed to see sheep with two.

Walking through the hospital, which was extremely clean, with lofty well-ventilated rooms, nearly unoccupied, a convincing proof of good management, and the healthiness of the station, we returned to the inn, quite ready for our breakfast, which had been waiting for some time. The hour of our departure was fixed for one o'clock, and our three kits not taking much time to pack up, being now reduced to a change of clothes

each, we passed the interval in the General's stable-yard examining his horses, which he kindly permitted us to do. From his former appointment in command of the Spahis, and his constant intercourse with tribes dwelling near the desert, where the finest horses are bred, he has not neglected the opportunities afforded him.

The General's favourite charger was purchased at a high price, and after a lengthened negotiation, from a wealthy chief in the south-west. A description of him will serve to give an idea of a first-rate Barbary Arab. Standing barely fifteen hands and a half, jet black, a coat like satin, and a mane and tail that would win the heart of any lady; small head well set on, large full eyes, wide nostrils, and small tapering ears in constant motion; a handsome forehand and plenty of bone (lightness below the knee being a common fault); broad and deep-chested, full in the girth, and well ribbed up; hind-quarters rather falling away, strong but not handsome; this, as well as carrying the tail meanly, is almost universal. Through kind treatment he had become as gentle as a

lamb; yet in every motion there was that wild freedom which, seized upon by Horace Vernet, gives such life and energy to his truthful pictures of Arab warfare.

Sultan, who occupies an empty stable in the same square, was present part of the time, and such is the force of habit, the horse did not seem to be in the least afraid of him, and he, in return, took no more notice of us or the horse than walking to the door, which was open, and looking around without attempting to come out. Quiet as he is at present, he may become dangerous, and General Marey, afraid of this, is anxious to part with him, not liking himself to place his pet in a cage.

Besides the horses and the lion, there were French sporting dogs, Arab curs, and a breed between the two. In a niche under the verandah was perched an eagle, looking most unhappy, and in an adjoining court were a couple of lovely gazelles, the male rather shy, but the female, more confiding, fed from our hands.

CHAPTER V.

Set out with Captain Martenot for the Little Desert—Formidable party—Steep ascent—Received by Bel Arbi—Beautiful situation of the tent—Shooting party—An Arab tent and furniture—Preparations for supper—Our bivouac—The Kaïd's answer—Couscousoo—Supper—Arrangements for passing the night—Day-break—Boar-hunt—Providential escape—Proceed to the dashera of the Haoueras—Arab huts—Breakfast “Beghir”—Fertile valley—Mid-day halt—Spahis—Arab douar—Arrive at Boghar.

COLLECTING outside the town at the appointed time, we commenced our march, accompanied for some distance by the General. On arriving at the verge of the plateau, overlooking a deep valley we had to cross, he took his leave, giving us into the charge of Captain Martenot, who had most kindly undertaken to show us life among the Bedoueens.

The day was beautiful ; a cool breeze tempered the rays of a brilliant sun, and descending into the valley, we soon overtook the party on foot, who had started an hour before us. We were now a formidable-looking body ; half a dozen officers of the garrison equipped for the chase, twenty light infantry to act next day as beaters, an escort of Spahis who were to continue with us till our return, a colonist from near Medeah, one of the best sportsmen in the province, several servants, Captain Martenot, and our three selves, altogether upwards of forty ; an indefinite number of dogs of all races and dimensions, from the powerful animal that would attack a boar single-handed, to the noisy little terrier that ran yelping after every rabbit that crossed the path, were attached to the party.

Keeping first on one, and then on the other bank of a small stream that lay half hid in the midst of the luxuriant underwood at the bottom of the valley, we continued in a westerly direction for nearly an hour ; the party on foot extending on either hand, beat the covers as we advanced, and an occa-

sional shot when a partridge rose, or a rabbit darted from bush to bush, enlivened the scene.

Lying on a heap of stones, I observed the first snake I had seen in Northern Africa ; its colour was a greenish yellow ; it was two feet and a half long, and of a harmless kind.

Leaving the valley by turning abruptly to the southward, we commenced a tedious ascent, toiling up the steep face of the mountain by a winding track, doing duty in the Atlas for a road. These paths are made by the Arabs with but little trouble ; the heavy rains falling in the winter and spring, form, in the course of their descent, by washing away the earth and small stones, a multitude of rocky channels, these channels, followed by the Arabs as far as they extend in the proper direction, are then abandoned for the next that may suit, and thus following the fall of the water, there is a road—such as it is—up the sides of the steepest mountains. In dry weather, they are a mass of stones and angular rocks, and after rain, there is the addition of a stream

of water. Pushing on ahead, I gained a rocky point half-way up the ascent, and dismounting, awaited the arrival of my companions by the side of a cool clear spring, rising under the shade of an ancient ilex. Resuming our march, the summit was soon reached, where, in a sheltered nook on the edge of the precipice, an Arab tent was prepared for us, and a hut of brushwood for the men. Bel-Arbi, the Kaïd of the Righa tribe, whose guests we were, a venerable old man, with a flowing beard as white as snow, received us with cordiality, paying the usual string of compliments, bending forward at each, with the hand placed on the breast. These being finished, he lead the way into the tent, and produced a most refreshing supply of milk in an iron pot, which, two or three times refilled, passed rapidly from mouth to mouth.

Thanks to the old Kaïd's native good taste, our encampment was placed on a beautiful spot, evidently not the result of accident or convenience, as he pointed out the extensive prospect with an air of pride ; and directed our attention to several huts

in the low ground—hardly distinguishable from the earth and brushwood around them—as the winter residence of his tribe.

We were on a small semicircular platform, under the crest of the mountain, with a sheltering wall of wood and rocks, overgrown with creepers, and forming a natural amphitheatre, opening towards the precipice, which, descending several hundred feet into the valley, afforded a magnificent view of the wild regions we had traversed. On the summit of the opposite ridge, to the north-east, lay Medeah, apparently close at hand, although three hours had barely served to accomplish the distance. In every other direction rose mountain beyond mountain, like the gigantic waves of some troubled sea, until wearied with the interminable extent, the eye sought relief in the valley below, where the stream, seen at intervals through the thick copse, was glancing brightly in the declining sun.

Two hours of daylight still remaining, and the Arabs reporting plenty of partridges on the hill-sides, we went out shooting. There were birds in abundance, and considering

the difficulty of flushing the red-legged partridge in such dense cover, a tolerable bag was made up, including three hares, some rabbits, and a snipe. Soon after dusk, the party reassembled, the produce of the evening's sport was counted over, and several hungry-toned voices commenced a series of inquiries after the state of the commissariat. Supper being not quite ready, I will take advantage of the interval to describe an Arab tent, taking the one we were to pass the night under as an example.

Several breadths of coarse brown cloth of the desired length are sewn together into an oblong piece, eyelet-holes are made, or loops are attached, for the tent-ropes at the edges; one, two, or three poles, according to the size of the tent, support the covering, which is stretched out, by being pegged down at the two ends and one side, to wooden pins driven into the ground, leaving generally an open space of a foot or more, all round, for the free admission of a current of air. The front is left quite open, although, sometimes, a curtain is hung up;

and if the tent is pitched in an exposed situation, the front is placed to leeward.

With poor people, a mat, or, perhaps, in winter, a few dressed sheep or goat-skins, form the sole furniture ; with the wealthier, the ground is covered with thick carpets, often of chaste patterns and brilliant colours. On these you sit, on these your meals are placed, and on these you sleep—that is, with regard to the latter, as well as the millions of industrious little inhabitants they always contain, will allow.

The night growing cold, a roaring fire of dry brushwood, crowned with the entire trunk of a tree, blazed and crackled cheerfully in front of the tent ; round one side of the fire, and grouping about two smaller ones were the voltigeurs busily superintending the cookery of a couple of sheep that had been dragged by their horns, baaing and struggling into the camp on our arrival : behind was the low dark outline of the hut, the entrance marked by the bright barrels of the piled arms glittering in the firelight. Before us two men were carefully turning a ramrod bearing three brace of plump par-

tridges, looking so brown and juicy, while the gravy hissed and spattered as it distilled, drop by drop, into the ashes below.

On the right of the large fire were squatted a double row of Arabs, silent and scarcely moving, except to pass the pipe from mouth to mouth, or when some old man stretched out his withered arms till his hands nearly touched the flame ; the second row of younger men and boys were not so stationary, rising to assist when water, wood, or other things were wanting, and looking after the horses which stood picketed around.

Inside the tent the scene was not less picturesque. Thrown into every imaginable attitude lay our merry noisy party, mingled with dogs, guns, blankets, and saddlery, while the old Kaïd and his eldest son, a handsome lad of sixteen, sitting gravely in the midst, doubtless wondered in their own minds what was going on. Commenting upon Bel Arbi's patriarchal appearance, he was asked his age? Looking sorrowfully down, he paused for an instant, and answered, quietly passing his hand down his white and flowing beard, " I

am not so very old ; a few years ago I was strong and healthy, but then *you* came, the troubles of my country commenced, and I am become what you now see me."

Supper now made its appearance. The Kaïd, taking the two enormous dishes of couscousoo from the women who had brought them up from the foot of the hill, where they had been prepared, placed them himself before us. Couscousoo, the national dish of Northern Africa, is prepared as follows. Flour is wetted, kneaded into a sort of paste, half dried in the sun, and then granulated by rubbing between the hands ; placed again in the sun, the grains become hard, and, when kept in a dry place, remain good for years. When wanted for use it is cooked in the following manner. A large vessel containing water at the bottom, and the meat to be dressed, whatever it may be, is placed on the fire ; over this, halfway up, is fixed a perforated plate, on which the couscousoo is placed, mixed with pepper, spices, vegetables, &c., according to taste and means, sometimes being quite plain ; the pot is then covered, and the steam ascend-

ing through the holes in the division, confined also by the lid, dresses the couscousoo, which, when sufficiently done, is turned out into a flattish wooden bowl, with a central leg a foot and a half high.

The meat boiled at the bottom is torn into pieces and strewn over the top, often with a handful of soft sugar ; the broth is generally thrown away, except a portion, which, mixed with milk, sugar, honey, or butter, is poured into the middle when the guests have taken their places and are ready to begin ; cold milk alone is, however, often used for this purpose.

Asking the Kaïd to sit down and eat with us, two parties were formed, one round each dish, and rudely cut wooden spoons, made somewhat after the fashion of a child's spade, being furnished to each person, a series of holes dug to the bottom of the dish soon showed, by their breadth and depth, that the couscousoo was as good as our appetites.

Our host was most attentive, pulling the lumps of mutton to pieces with his own fingers, and presenting us with the choicest morsels. During the meal, water, and both

sweet and sour milk, were handed round. When we had finished, the remnant of the feast was passed to the Arabs outside, who soon cleared off what we had left, the elderly men helping themselves first ; not, however, taking more than their share, although there were several of them who very seldom had an opportunity of partaking of a dish like this, except on great occasions ; the younger ones behaved with equal propriety, neither scrambling nor greediness was to be observed amongst them.

Our supper was finished with the partridges, which proved excellent, and a few glasses of capital Bordeaux, and, as we were to be up at peep of day, we commenced settling ourselves for the night. The sleeping arrangements were very simple, and therefore soon made : a saddle or a valise served for a pillow, and, rolling ourselves up in our cloaks, we lay down to sleep..

Having been well fed ourselves, it was now—according to the law of nature, that animals should prey on each other—our turn to be fed upon. It was useless struggling against what must be, and perceiving

that the advanced guard of the invaders had already entered the works at a weak point, the junction of the trousers and the boots, I resigned myself to my fate, and, defying the fleas to do their worst, was sound asleep in another minute.

Day was breaking, when we were aroused next morning by the arrival of a party of the Arabs who were to assist at the hunt. The morning was bitterly cold, the thermometer standing at 43 degrees, and a dense mist covering the face of the mountains rendered objects at twenty yards invisible. The sun was just rising red and angry through the fog, when we set forth for the spot that had been fixed upon by the Arabs for our first beat, where we arrived after half an hour's walk. In the meantime the aspect of the morning was changed ; the sun, having dispersed the mist, shone gloriously, giving promise of a fine day.

Fifty Arabs were collected when we came up, a number that afterwards swelled to nearly two hundred, many of them mounted, who, having heard what was going on, joined us from the neighbouring tribes ; a multitude

of dogs was also gathered together, for where the brush-wood is so thick it is difficult to force the boars to break cover without actually coming upon them, and therefore any little barking cur that has a tolerable nose is useful.

The Righas are held the best sportsmen in this part of the Atlas, and are passionately fond of hunting; a single man will sometimes follow a boar for two or three days by the track, and kill him at last with a single dog, seldom firing unless within a few yards; when killed, the only use they make of the meat is to feed their dogs, and, if near a French station, they occasionally take it there for sale. Some of the dogs are handsome, powerful animals, resembling those bred in England between a greyhound and a foxhound, are courageous, and will singly attack a boar. These dogs are rare, and valued accordingly, a fine one being seldom parted with by an Arab unless tempted by a high price.

The place of rendezvous was the summit of a wooded ridge, sloping gradually down to a ravine below, the ground narrowing with the

declivity, and enclosed on both hands by the steep sides of the surrounding mountains. The twenty voltigeurs, placed at intervals among the Arabs, were formed in an extended line along the ridge, two of the guns, and all the dogs, remained with them ; the rest of the guns, descending quietly, were posted on the bank of a small stream that ran through the valley, at the points where it was considered probable that the boars would attempt to pass.

When we were all placed, the signal was given from below, and the line advanced, making as much noise as possible in beating the cover, the infantry firing blank cartridge, the Arabs shouting, and the dogs barking. Nothing, however, was found ; and the two next ravines were also drawn blank. In the fourth beat we were more fortunate ; recent traces of the presence of the game were discovered. The boar could not be far off, and laying on the dogs, a dozen voices roared out, “Haloof, haloof” (pig, pig), a general rush was made in the direction of those who had viewed the game, the noise redoubled, and the scene became most exciting. The ra-

vine, steep, rocky, and clothed with thick brushwood, seemed to be alive with men, the burnished barrels of the voltigeurs glancing in the sunlight as they pushed forward from bush to bush, keeping up an irregular fire, each shot marked by a curl of white smoke rising from the copse, and the report repeated again and again, echoing among the hills. The Arabs, with their long guns, and the loose folds of their ber-nouses waving in the air as they rushed at full speed over the roughest ground, mingled their wild cries with the yelling and barking of the dogs ; on the ridges overlooking the ravine the horsemen watching the motions of those below to enable them to cut off the boars if they should take to the hill, were galloping about at a fearful pace over rocks and stones, now lost sight of in some deep gully, then seen clambering from rock to rock, their animals more like goats than horses, and having regained the crest, every movement of the steeds and their excited riders was visible to us below, each figure standing out in bold relief against the deep blue of a cloudless sky.

Notwithstanding the exertions of the mounted party, the game crossed the hill into the neighbouring ravine, but not until a two year old had been shot by an Arab, and a fine old boar severely hit. He managed to get away, and we afterwards heard, on our return to Medeah, that he had been tracked, and sent to General Marey a day or two after by the Arabs.

The chase having taken a contrary direction to our camp, we had a long walk before us under a broiling sun, the breeze had died away, and the stunted trees and bushes afforded no shade at noon. At one o'clock we reached the tent, where the thermometer in the shade stood at 92 degrees, after eight hours' hard work, well repaid for our labour by the magnificence of the scenery, and the excitement of a sport so novel in all its features.

During the morning one of the party had a narrow escape, from the accidental discharge of a pistol; had the direction of the muzzle, at the instant when it was fired, been changed even an eighth of an inch to either side, he must have been severely hurt;

as it was, he most providentially escaped with a slight wound, which, although painful, was not serious.

At three o'clock the officers and the detachment from Medeah commenced their homeward march. In the course of an hour afterwards we started for the dashera* of the Haouera tribe, distant about three leagues. The Kaïd was unwilling to part with us, as he considered it rather throwing a reflection on his hospitality, leaving him so near sun-down. Our party, reduced in number, still made a respectable appearance, consisting of Captain Martenot, two servants, with a spare horse and the baggage mule, the escort of four Spahis and our three selves; the Kaïd's son, and three or four of his tribe, also accompanied us as guides.

Leaving the wooded country, we proceeded in a south-easterly direction across an elevated plateau of some extent, quite bare of underwood, but good pasture land, with here and there a patch of corn-field; a couple of brace of partridges were shot on the way,

* *Dashera*, a village, a collection of huts. An Arab encampment is called a *Douar*.

and it was dark by the time we arrived at the edge of the valley, where, looking down, we could see the fire burning brightly in front of the tent prepared for us, and the shadowy figures grouped around waiting to welcome the expected guests.

Giving the horses their heads, they picked their way down the almost perpendicular side of the hill, dark as it was, without making a false step, and riding up to the fire, we found Mansour, the Kaïd of the tribe, waiting to receive us. Two tents had been pitched under a grove of fine old trees—one for us, and the other for the Spahis and Arabs. The supper was couscousoo, the same as yesterday ; and the day's work having entitled us to enjoy a good night's rest, in spite of the assaults of our nocturnal enemies, the fire was supplied with fresh fuel, and quiet soon reigned in the camp.

March 16th. The whole party stirring at sunrise, and having a ride of eight or nine hours before us to Boghar, only waited for the breakfast the Kaïd's women were getting ready. On looking about in daylight, we found the village of the Haoueras fifty yards

from the tents, placed under the cliff we had descended the previous evening, which looked steeper now than it had seemed to be in the dark. The village was placed on a slope, for the advantage of draining, and numbered about a dozen huts, built of stone and mud, in an oblong form, the door, which also answers the purpose of a window, being placed at the end.

The walls, seldom more than four feet high, are covered with a slanting roof made of the large branches of trees, and thatched with straw or reeds; the earth cleared of stones, and beaten hard, forms the floor, with a hole scratched in it for the fireplace, and the furniture usually consists of a stone mill for grinding corn, a few pots, a lamp—merely an earthen saucer, with a lip to receive the wick—and half a dozen rush mats for sleeping on.

Such are in general the primitive habitations of these Arab tribes, who, having forsaken the plains, and dwelling in the mountains, are become an agricultural, in place of a pastoral, race. The Kaïd alone, or perhaps

some wealthy individual, possesses a tent and carpets such as had been furnished for our use the two last nights.

Two women now approached the tents bearing our breakfast ; they did not come nearer than the edge of the clump of trees, at which place the men relieved them of the dishes ; the younger of the two, who was rather good-looking, remained a moment or two staring at us, and did not seem to object to being examined in turn, at the distance of ten paces. The shrill, angry voice of an old woman who had been watching at the door of her hut the safe transit of the dishes, probably her own handiwork, recalled the girl in haste, and I doubt not but that she paid dearly enough for the gratification of her curiosity.

The breakfast was excellent, and did the old woman much credit, besides serving as an apology for her scolding tongue, as we all know that at home cooks are not famed for the equanimity of their tempers when engaged in the kitchen, and it was therefore likely that the anxiety to do well, joined to

the heat of the fire, may have added somewhat to the warmth of her temper. The principal dish, and the one on which she had lavished her skill, was called Beghir, and made of hot cakes, full of little cells, like a crumpet, soaked in equal quantities of honey and melted butter.

We helped ourselves with our fingers, fishing out the pieces of cake, and by a dexterous twist securing for each morsel its fair proportion of butter and honey; hard boiled eggs, and milk, both sour and sweet, formed the rest of our meal. In eating we only made use of our right hand, following the custom of the Arabs (almost universal throughout the East), who never touch the food with the left hand except when it cannot be avoided—as, for instance, in separating a large piece of meat, or clawing a fowl asunder.

At six o'clock we set out, accompanied by two Arabs, who were to guide us into the road which connects Medeah and Boghar. Thanks to the kindness of Captain Martenot, I was to-day well mounted on his spare horse, a handsome spirited iron grey, well bred, and as active as a cat, which he

lent to each of us in turn, mounting one of his servants on the Bleedah pony.

The weather was delightful, bright and sunny, without being like the preceding day, too hot. Our route lay down the rich and cultivated valley, at the upper end of which the Haouera village is placed ; a fertilizing stream, as clear as crystal, wound along the bottom of the glen, enclosed on either hand by the wooded and craggy sides of the sheltering mountains.

On this valley nature had bestowed her choicest favours—beautiful scenery, a fruitful soil, and a delicious climate—and here it was cheering to find that man had not received her bounties with indifference : for upwards of an hour we rode through a succession of fields green with the newly-sprung corn, interspersed with patches of vines, melons, pumpkins, and a few vegetables ; whilst, scattered about on the slopes, and on the banks of the stream, numerous almond trees covered with a profusion of delicate blossoms, together with the fig and the olive, were thriving luxuriantly.

After leaving the valley, we traversed a succession of rocky ridges, partially clothed

with stunted trees and brushwood ; a few patches of cultivated land were seen at intervals, and the country we passed through on this day swarmed with the red-legged partridge. The morning was getting rather warm, when, at the end of three hours, we entered the direct road between Medeah and Boghar. At noon we halted under the shade of a clump of large firs, growing on the picturesque banks of a mountain stream, which at this spot fell gently over a rocky barrier that crossed its bed. During this halt, I had the first quiet opportunity of examining our escort. The Spahis are the Arab irregular cavalry, in the pay of France. For their pay they provide themselves with horses, accoutrements, clothing, and provisions ; their arms are now furnished by Government, as the native weapons are of so inferior a quality : they consist of a cavalry sword attached to the saddle, on the near side, under the flap, with the hilt close to the pommel, so that, when mounted, the sword lies under the left thigh ; the long Arab seven foot gun is replaced by a French musket, carried either in front across the saddle, or slung at the back. Their

saddlery and equipments are the same as those of any respectable Arab, and to distinguish them in action they wear the upper berious red, instead of white or brown. The horses of our escort were tolerable, but the appearance of the finest animal of the four was ruined by the custom of shaving the tails of young horses, to strengthen the hair, which in our eyes had a most absurd appearance, as, when the hair begins to grow, it sticks out stiff all round, like the bristles of a brush.

Resuming our march, after an hour's ride we descended into the valley of the Cheleeff, the principal river of Algeria. In a plain on its banks we saw a douar, or encampment of the Bedoueen Arabs—the first we had seen pitched in the form of a circle, with the openings, when practicable, towards the east ; and in the centre of which the flocks and herds are placed, during the night, for safety. Several large flocks of camels were feeding in the vicinity, and the slopes of the rising were covered with sheep and cattle. Proceeding along the western bank of the Cheleeff, we commenced the ascent of the spur of the mountain upon which Boghar

is built. When half way up, we were met by the officers of the garrison, who had ridden out to receive us, and at five o'clock we entered the little frontier fortress. In the evening we arranged our plans for visiting the tribes of the Little Desert, and took up our quarters in a spare ward in the Hospital—a room superior, in point of size and comfort, to that of any officer in the post.

CHAPTER VI.

Boghar—Its commanding situation—Roman remains—Capture in 1841—Present state—Grotto—Reflections on the past—Market day—Family party—Importance of Boghar to the French—Trade with the interior—The Nomadic tribes—Their yearly wanderings and traffic—Probable diversion of trade from its ancient channels—Cross the Cheleeff—Arabic legend—The Little Desert—Horsemanship—Thunderstorm—Arrive at the douar of the Oulad—Mocktar—Sketching—Grand entertainment—Ben-Aouda : his personal appearance and history.

THE hour fixed for the setting out of the party being ten o'clock, we had sufficient time to examine the fort and its environs, in the morning, before breakfast. As an advanced post, Boghar has been well chosen by the conquering nations, who have successively overrun the country.

On the western bank of the Cheleeff, forty leagues to the southward of Algiers, and perched on the crest of a rocky promontory,

projecting into and overlooking the wide plain of the Little Desert, it serves, at the same time, to hold in check both the stationary inhabitants of the Atlas and the migratory tribes of the desert, who, equally dependant upon each other for many of the necessaries of life, meet at stated times on the bank of the Cheleeff, near Boghar, to exchange the produce of the mountain and the plain. Rising in the calcareous rock are several springs of pure water, which, affording an abundant supply at all seasons of the year, probably led to the formation of a military position by the Romans, on the spot.

In clearing the ground for the establishment of the present post, and in excavating the ditch which protects it on the southern side, many traces were discovered of the Roman occupation—foundations of buildings, dressed stones, and a few coins, amongst them a Roman gold coin, described as being in a fine state of preservation, but which unfortunately had been concealed by the soldier who had found it, and sold to a Jew in Algiers, without having been shown to any one competent to fix the date.

In the month of May, 1841, Boghar, and Thaza, a small fortress thirteen or fourteen leagues to the westward, were taken possession of by a force under the command of General Baraguay d'Hilliers, without opposition, the Arabs having evacuated and burnt them, on the approach of the French troops. Their capture was a severe blow to Abd-el-Kader, who had considered the positions of the two forts as beyond the reach of the French arms. A few miserable Arab huts still remain near the fort, which has itself been lately re-established, with a small garrison of a hundred and twenty men, as the frontier post of the province of Tittery.

The defences of the place are but slight ; strong palisades, which enclose the western and northern faces, a dry ditch and earthen rampart on the south, and on the eastern side the exterior wall of the officers' quarters, loopholed and built on the edge of the natural declivity of the mountain descending towards the river, are sufficient protection to enable the slender garrison to set at defiance any force that the tribes could gather against them. Two light field-pieces are mounted on the upper angle of the works, and a strong

blockhouse occupies the summit of the hill which commands the fort. In the interior are the quarters of the officers and men, and the hospital, which, as is the case at all the other stations in Algeria, appears to receive the principal attention of the authorities, for while the former consist only of rows of small cottages, the latter is substantially built, and is, even in this petty post on the verge of the desert, supplied with every possible accommodation and comfort for the sick.

During the greater portion of the year the climate of Boghar is tolerably healthy; in the months of July, August, and September, when the heat is the greatest, fevers, principally of the intermittent type, are prevalent, and the garrison also suffers much annoyance from the hot winds of the desert, which occasionally blow with great violence, charged with clouds of dust and almost impalpable sand.

Looking towards the south, the eye wanders at a glance over the broad undulating expanse of the Little Desert, unbroken save by the shining surfaces of the lakes ten leagues distant, which we were about to visit.

In the far distance rise the blue summits of the lofty mountains of the Djebel Ammour, the northern boundary of the Great Sahara Desert, a portion of the gigantic range stretching from the Atlantic to the confines of Lybia, placed by nature a mighty barrier between the regions of life and death, separating fruitfulness from sterility, and marking the limits of the barren waste spread in dreary desolation over a fourth of Africa.

Near at hand, in the limestone rock, is a natural grotto, almost concealed by an aged fig-tree growing out of the entrance. It is the very spot to rejoice the heart of a romantic dreamer, shady and cool when all without is blazing in the rays of a burning sun ; some passing breeze occasionally stirring the broad green leaves that veil the opening, grants glimpses of the plain below ; the gentle rustling of the foliage alone breaks the stillness of the noon-day, the mind yields insensibly to the charm, the present is forgotten, and the imagination, teeming with busy fancies, peoples the scene with the actors of bygone centuries, recalling in quick succession the Numidian struggling in vain against the all-conquering power of Rome ;

the decline of paganism ; the dawn and promising morning of Christianity, when Africa boasted of her martyrs, her persecutions endured and gloried in, and could number eight hundred bishopricks throughout her provinces ; the fall of the Romans ; the invasion of the Vandals ; the last feeble efforts of the enervate eagle that once flew victorious over the known world ; the quenching of the pure light of the gospel in blood, and the Cross overwhelmed in the fierce tide of the Saracenic invasion, so utterly swept from the face of the land, that hardly a trace remains to tell the passing traveller that here for centuries flourished the church of Christ ; the mind then plunging sadly into the dark period of Mahometan rule, crowds the stage with a long array of fanatic warriors, holding Europe herself in awe—when the sharp roll of the garrison drums, striking cheerfully on the ear, dispels the visions of the past, and awakens the dreamer to the reality that a new era in the history of Africa has commenced.

At half-past ten we left the fort, our party increased by four out of the six officers of the garrison, and descending the mountain,

arrived at the plain near the bank of the river where the fairs and markets are held. This being a market-day, a couple of hundred Arabs were collected, with a due proportion of horses, camels, cattle, and sheep ; five ragged tents were pitched on the slope, belonging to parties from a distance, whose wives and families had accompanied them. The business had been transacted in the morning, many were preparing for their homeward journey, and others had already started.

One party especially attracted my attention, consisting of a man, his two wives, and six children ; a camel and three donkeys carried all that they possessed in the world. A tent and the dirty bags that held the spare clothes and household sundries, were neatly packed, with the tent-poles fore and aft, on the camel's back, whose burden was made up with leathern water bags, a handmill, and metal cooking pots suspended on either side. Each donkey carried a sack of corn, the produce of the morning's barter, as big as itself. One of the women, with a bundle of rags on her back, that on close inspection proved to be a baby, led an elder child by the hand,

nor was the other, although unoccupied with maternal duties, idle,—as heavily laden as the asses, she trudged along as patiently, while the lord of the creation, carrying nothing but his gun, lounged quietly by the side of his camel, leaving the task of donkey driving to the boys.

This family had probably several days to march before they would rejoin their tribe, proceeding by easy journeys, and halting at any spot that might be convenient, only taking care to avoid the neighbourhood of hostile tribes with whom their own might happen to be at variance. A short time serves to unload the camel, spread the mats, and pitch the tent. A few handfuls of corn, ground in the mill, kneaded into a paste with water, and baked in thin cakes on the fire, with a drink of water, or, if they have it, of milk, forms their simple meal. In the morning the tent is struck with the same facility that it was pitched the evening before, the baggage reloaded, and the journey resumed day after day until their destination is reached.

In the autumn, when the great fair is held, several thousand people are gathered toge-

ther ; the wandering Bedoueens from the desert bring the produce of their herds and flocks, exchanging hides, cheese, butter, and wool, together with dates, skins of wild beasts, ostrich feathers, &c. received from the interior, and the woollen manufactures of the Arab women, for corn, honey, oil, and the few articles of European merchandize they value, such as cutlery and cotton cloths, the sale of arms and ammunition, formerly the principal objects of traffic, having been prohibited by the French. Horses are also sold, and a valuable animal may be picked up by chance. This annual fair is of great value to the French government, as it enables them to collect the tribute which otherwise they could not do from the more distant tribes, whose necessities, joined to the calculation they have made that the profit of the trade is greater than the amount of the tax, are the powerful causes which induce many to allow their hatred to be overcome by their avarice.

The importation of French manufactures has been rapidly increasing, and if the district remains tolerably quiet for the next year or two, the fairs of Boghar, as the position

nearest the seaport of Algiers in the direct line between it and some of the richest and most populous regions of the interior, must become the great marts of Northern Africa south of the lesser Atlas, which hitherto has been supplied with foreign manufactures by the roundabout routes of Morocco on one side, and those of Tunis and Tripoli on the other. In the former the trade is and has been for a long period in the hands of the English; in the two latter, the French and Italians share it with us. The policy and regulations of the late Algerine government, together with the difficulty of transport through the passes of the Atlas, were the causes that forced the current of the trade to flow in such lengthened and expensive channels.

These great obstacles are now removed, at least, from the path of the French merchants; French manufactures, shipped on board French vessels, are exported to Algiers, and landed under the wing of a heavy protective duty, which has the effect of excluding from competition the goods of other nations. Roads have been made, and are now in progress through the Atlas, following

a straight line, drawn from the city of Algiers to the verge of the Desert: the pacification of the country, and submission of the tribes between Bleedah and Boghar, give a cheap, and at present a safe route, by which a market may be reached, geographically convenient to the producer and consumer, and equally beneficial to both parties; the wants of the native population are supplied at a lower rate than was possible by the old channels, and the merchants relieved of the onerous burden of a tedious and expensive land carriage, exposed, moreover, to many risks from weather and from violence, are able at the same time to increase their profits and extend their trade.

Besides the supply of the districts in the immediate vicinity of the French territories, a new line is developing itself for the extension of her commerce, which, if entered upon with judgment and enterprise, cannot fail to prove most advantageous to France.

The active agents by whom this commerce has been commenced, and through whom it will be conducted, are the Nomadic tribes of the Great Sahara, who, without fixed dwelling places, are still obliged, by

the natural change of the seasons, to follow a certain annual plan in their wanderings. The winter and spring are passed in feeding their flocks on the plateau of the desert, where, during those seasons, they find water and pasturage. Towards the end of the spring, when these are both growing scarce, they visit the Saharian towns and villages, whose inhabitants, leading a sedentary life, occupy themselves with the culture of the date palm, and in woollen manufactures, which are principally the work of the women, and find a ready sale in Algeria and Morocco. Loading their camels with dates, woollens, and perhaps a few articles from remoter parts of the interior, they move northwards at the period when the Desert, at this time of the year worthy of its name, affords neither herbage or water, to the more hospitable plains on the south side of the Atlas, where both are to be found. Soon after their arrival the harvest takes place, corn is plentiful in the market, and at its lowest price. Trade goes on briskly for some time, the summer passes away, and the tribes set out, on their return to the Sahara, laden with corn and goods that they have

received in exchange for the produce of the south. Marching by short and easy stages, they arrive, towards the end of autumn, at the points from which they had started at the commencement of the past summer. They now find the dates ripe, and the gathering, which is the harvest of the Sahara, going on. A market is established, the people supply themselves with corn, &c.; thus paying, with the present crop of dates, for the articles that had been purchased with the crop of the previous year: the woollens made during the twelve months are also disposed of at this time. The transactions of the season are now closed by the Arabs placing the dates and goods in store, to await the journey of the ensuing year; then, wandering forth into the Desert, they roam about during the winter and spring, until the approach of summer compels them to resume the same routine.

It is easy to perceive what an opening a regular system such as this, that has endured for centuries, offers for the extension of commerce. In the interior, the routes taken by the caravans trading with Mogador to the west, and with Tunis and Tripoli to

the east ; by which ports, more particularly by the former, the greater part of the export trade is carried on, and European fabrics introduced, are neither so accessible, so safe, nor so direct as the northern route to Algiers, to which eventually the preference will be given by an extensive tract of country, although it will probably take many years to divert the trade from its long-established course. Sooner or later this must happen ; and the result will be, that a considerable portion of the exports of the interior, instead of passing, as heretofore, through the hands of the British merchants of Mogador, &c., will swell the trade of Algiers ; French manufactures thus replacing those of Great Britain.

I hope that I shall be forgiven for having detained the reader, wandering so long on the banks of the river, where our party did not remain in reality five minutes.

The Cheleeff, concealed in a deep bed worn in the sandy soil of the Little Desert, is hardly visible until the brink is reached. At the spot where we crossed, a zig-zag path on either bank renders the ford accessible ; the water was rather higher than yes-

terday, and we just managed to get across without a ducking. A casual remark made on the steepness of the banks, and the difficulty of reaching the bed of the river, led to the relation of the Arabic legend, accounting for the origin and the formation of the Cheleeff.

Many centuries ago, there lived Sidi-el-Arhibi, Agha of Mostaganem, a chief renowned for his wealth and courage, and, above all, for his piety. Wandering with his tents and flocks from pasture to pasture, it happened, that one day, when, according to custom, his daughter went forth with the women of the household to draw water from the only well near at hand, they found, on arriving, a party of Arabs already in possession, who received the women with jeers and insults, driving them from the well, and forcing them to return homewards without water. The first impulse of Sidi-el-Arhibi, on hearing of the insults offered to his daughter, was revenge. Controlling, however, his passion, he remained for a short time meditating in silence, then, turning towards Mecca, and calling upon God and the Prophet for assistance, he laid his curse

upon the well that had been the scene of such unwonted inhospitality, which, from that moment, became for ever dry. Unwilling to irremediably injure the country, he added, that power had been given him both to punish and to do good, and, mounting his favourite mare, rode furiously towards the sea—a river rising behind, as he galloped, at full speed, across the plain. The Cheleeff, the principal river in Algeria, whose waters in their course fertilize the extensive districts through which they pass, rises at the spot from whence he started, which is now called the Sebaoun Aïoun, or the Seventy Fountains, and flows in the exact route followed by Sidi-el-Arhibi, who reached the shore of the Mediterranean, near Mostaganem, where, at the present day, the Cheleeff joins the sea. The steep banks were placed as a lasting punishment to the inhospitable tribes and their descendants, who, from that time to this, have drawn with toil and labour from the river the supplies of water which their forefathers obtained with ease from the well. The legend goes on to relate that it was a hot day in summer when this occurrence took

place, and that the mare he rode, much tormented by the flies, formed the numerous bends and windings of the river by the whisking of her tail.

We proceeded in a southerly direction across the plain, which, covered with short grass and perfectly level, was too tempting an arena for the display of their skill in arms and horsemanship to be overlooked by the Spahis of our escort. Dashing forward at full speed, flourishing their guns in the air, and shouting “Fantazia, Fantazia!” they crossed and recrossed in every direction, sometimes attacking and pursuing each other, or charging us, standing up in their short stirrups with presented arms, as if about to fire, and when within a few paces suddenly wheeling, or checking their horses so severely with the bit, that, thrown violently on their haunches, it appeared as if both men and horses were coming to the ground, then recovering, after an instant’s pause they would turn as on a pivot, and spring off in an opposite direction. The excitement was shared by the whole party; even our little horses, inspirited by example and full of barley, scampered along as proudly as if

they had been the descendants of the purest Arab blood.

The heat of the day, as well as the necessity of allowing the mule with the baggage to keep up with us, soon forced us to moderate our pace. After an hour's ride, the turf became chequered with barren spots, and as we advanced towards a rocky ridge that crossed the plain from east to west, the herbage grew more scanty, and the patches of sand and gravel increased in size and number. After passing the chain of rocks, where we made a short halt, the vegetation almost ceased, and for an hour and a half our route lay among sandy hillocks, with tufts of grass, or dwarf shrubs a few inches high, scattered here and there.

The breeze had entirely died away, an oppressive stillness was in the air, and man and beast, so lately full of life and spirit, laboured along heavily through the loose stones and sand. A small dark cloud rose in the south-west, the hitherto clear sky became rapidly overcast, and ten minutes after the first appearance of the black speck a violent thunderstorm burst over our heads, rain fell in torrents, vivid flashes of light-

ning darting from the centre of the clouds, ran along the ground, and the thunder rolled over the plain until caught up by the mountains, then echoing again and again from peak to peak, the last sound died faintly away among the distant valleys of the Atlas. Accompanied by a high wind, the storm passed over as quickly as it had arisen, the sky again appeared as calm and clear as before, and the only traces that remained were the refreshing coolness of the air, and the rain-drops glittering among the leaves of the scanty herbage.

Crossing a low range of stony hillocks, we entered upon a grassy plain nearly level, extending in long swelling undulations towards the south. Deep fissures in the earth, formed by the rains of winter, intersect the plain at intervals, and carry the water towards the Cheleeff, the principal drain of the Little Desert.

Continuing for three hours, falling in occasionally with flocks of camels herded by armed men, we arrived at the banks of a small river, flowing through, or rather forming, a morass, extending on each side for a considerable distance. We floundered

through the middle of the muddy stream with no other casualty than the mule slipping down the bank, and pitching his rider into the water. Wading for half an hour up to the horse's knees in mud and water, covered with sedges and long coarse grass, we reached firm ground, and came in sight of our destination, a circle of black tents pitched on the plain, still two miles distant.

It was nearly six o'clock when we arrived at the douar. Ben-Aouda, chief of the tribe of Oulad-Mocktar, and Agha of the Little Desert, received us himself in front of the tent prepared for our party. After the usual compliments had passed, dates and "leben," or sour milk, were offered to us, as the evening meal would not be ready for some time. There was evidently a large number of people collected, and the douar seemed to be in an unusual state of excitement; a crowd, which our arrival had broken up for a short time, had gathered in front of a tent, and the sound of music, the shrill cries of the women, and repeated discharges of fire-arms, shewed that something was going forward, which, on inquiry, proved to

be the rejoicings held in honour of the marriage of the Agha's son.

Some of the party rambled out with their guns in the neighbourhood, and I occupied myself in sketching the encampment, as well as the crowd of Arabs who formed a circle around would allow me. The curiosity excited by this simple proceeding was very great ; I could not make them understand that it was not possible to see through them. As soon as I had succeeded in clearing an avenue, and took my eyes off them for a moment, when I looked up again it was closed ; I sat down, hoping they would get tired and go away ; it was of no avail, they squatted down also. I now thought it was all right : as long as they remained seated, I, by standing up, could see over their heads ; hardly, however, had I made a stroke, when, seeing me re-commence, the standing circle was re-formed with the greatest gravity and decorum ; there was no crowding or pushing, and no noise, they gave me plenty of room, and they did everything I wished them to do—except get out of the way. I was about to give it up in despair, when a very handsome boy, a

grandson of the Agha's, of nine or ten years old, who had attached himself to me since our arrival, found out what I wanted ; and, explaining to the others the state of the case, they immediately drew back to the rear.

As the sun set, the horses, flocks, and herds that had left the encampment in the morning, were seen approaching the douar from all sides, it being the invariable practice to enclose them during the night in the centre of the circle formed by the tents, both for security against robbers and to prevent straying. The call to evening prayer was given, and pleasure, as well as business, gave place, for a few minutes, to the duties of their religion.

Having arrived in time to partake of the wedding-feast, our supper was on a grand scale. The first dish was "hamis," prepared by stewing small pieces of mutton in sweet sauce, and seasoned with red pepper ; then two sheep roasted whole, each carried upright on a wooden spit, and preceded by a blazing torch, were paraded in front of our tent ; one was sent to our escort and servants, and the other, attacked by a dozen knives, was cut up in our presence ;

and, in an incredibly short space of time after their first appearance, several wooden dishes, heaped with fragments of mutton, tender, juicy, and roasted to perfection, were placed before us. Three large dishes of couscousoo followed ; and, after a short interval, the entertainment was wound up with stewed gazelle, garnished with thin unleavened cakes of wheaten flour. Ample justice was done by all to the Agha's hospitality, and the roast mutton and gazelle were unanimously pronounced, especially the latter, to be excellent.

Ben-Aouda, on our invitation, joined us at supper, and played well his part of a courteous host, pressing us to eat, and fishing out with his fingers the most delicate morsels from the depths of the gravy, which he placed on the edge of the dish for our convenience.

As the most powerful Arab chief in the district, and having the reputation of talent, we regarded him with interest. He is about fifty years of age, rather above the middle size, with handsome though harsh features, of the true Arab cast, and was plainly dressed in a white berrous. What struck

me most in his appearance, was the expression of deep cunning strongly marked in the lines that crossed his forehead, and in the downcast and furtive glances of the eyes, observing everything, yet seemingly inattentive.

Of ancient family—and there are few nations who lay more store upon birth and pedigree than the Arabs—wealthy, talented, and the head of the powerful tribe of the Oulad-Mocktar, he joined in the first attempts to repel the invaders of his country. For a considerable period he acted as one of Abd-el-Kader's most trusted lieutenants ; but, foreseeing what must be the inevitable result of the struggle, and perhaps also influenced by jealousy of Abd-el-Kader's superiority, at rather a critical moment he went over to the French, deserting and then attacking his own countrymen ; by these means he secured to his tribe their possessions, under the French Government ; and, as his own price, received the appointment of Agha over the tribes of the Little Desert, with the allowance of a tenth part of the tribute paid by the tribes under his jurisdiction, which

may be computed at upwards of ten thousand francs per annum.

Attached to the French by the powerful ties of self-interest, his adhesion to their cause tended greatly towards the pacification of an extensive district ; and, as long as he considers it advantageous, he will, doubtless, side with them as the strongest ; but the man who has once abandoned his friends, is not likely to hesitate, when opportunity offers, to betray his enemies. I look upon Ben-Aouda as a fair type of the Arab chiefs in the pay of France ; influenced by the prudential motives of fear or avarice (and many are well aware of the utter hopelessness of a struggle at the present time), they conceal their hatred of the nation that has curbed their independence, and whom they are enjoined by their religion to despise, looking forward to a period when they may renew the contest with a chance of success.

Under existing circumstances, the part taken by Ben-Aouda, however base it appears in our eyes, admits of palliation when we consider the want of union among the Arabs ; held together by no universal in-

terest, the ties of a common ancestry, language, and religion, are weakened by the constant succession of wars and feuds between tribes and families; so that, accustomed from earliest childhood to see Arab opposed to Arab, living, perhaps, in a state of deadly enmity with their nearest neighbours, those feelings of abhorrence with which we regard the man who deserts and turns against his countrymen, are not felt by them with the same intensity; his tribe, moreover, was prosperous, and located in an open plain exposed to the razzias of the French troops, if he had remained at war, sooner or later their ruin was certain; and lastly, in addition, he himself, who was rich, would have lost all that he possessed.

CHAPTER VII.

Morning scene in the douar—Visit to the Dahias—Flamingoes—Marriage rejoicings—Woman's dress—Dancing—Fantasia—Accident—Arab marriages and divorces—Condition of an Arab woman—Complaint and decision against a Kaid—French and English—Take leave of Ben-Aouda—Arab hospitality—Cultivation of the soil—Silos—Their destruction by the French troops—Arab burying-ground—Return to Boghar.

AWAKENED next morning by the dawn o-day, and by the various sounds that increasing each moment, arose from the crowd of animals, which having passed the night inside the circle of the douar, and impatient to regain their liberty, were expressing their feelings, each after his kind, in the loudest key, I stood at the entrance of the tent, and watched the busy scene. A pace or two in front were our horses, tethered by the fore feet to a long rope stretched on the ground and

fastened down by strong pegs ; beyond were camels, sheep, goats, and cattle confusedly huddled together, and men, women, and children all actively employed in milking, and separating the herds.

The camels stood patiently, waiting to be milked ; the young ones, staid, quiet-looking little things, all hump, scarce seemed to have a frisk in them, gambolling awkwardly about their mothers, endeavouring first on one side and then on the other, to push away the nets which, preventing them from sucking during the night, secured a share of the milk for their owners, who, when they have helped themselves, remove the net. A little farther off, children were catching the ewes and goats for the women to milk (the camels being a task for the men). In another quarter the brood mares and foals were collecting. The sheep and goats were flocking together. The seeming confusion was subsiding, and one after another the herds began to move slowly off towards the spots assigned for the day's pasturage. A few of the camels, left to the last, were hopping about on three legs eager to be off ; each having a fore leg doubled and kept

confined in that position by a loop of cord slipped over the knee, to prevent straying. In a short time quiet was restored to the douar. By means of a rough calculation, I estimated the number to be about 3000 head of various kinds of stock, the camels which I counted amounting to nearly 500, including the young.

The Agha now came to pay his respects, and to say that the party who were to conduct us to the dahias (the lakes) were ready to start whenever we wished. Dates and milk were brought for our breakfast; and at seven o'clock we set out at a smart canter, accompanied by Ben-Aouda's brother and five or six Arabs; the former was mounted on a handsome mare, his bridle and saddle beautifully embroidered in gold, and ornamented with thin silver plates, contrasted somewhat oddly with a rather dirty white berious, as did also his bare legs and feet with a pair of gilt stirrups.

Passing several other douars and large herds of camels, &c., a ride of seven miles over the plain brought us to the nearest of the lakes. Nearly dry in summer, in winter and spring they are of some considerable

extent, though shallow, and at these seasons covered with innumerable flocks of wild fowl of every description. We visited four, situated within a short distance of each other, the largest about two miles in length by half a mile in breadth, and the smallest, which appeared to be deeper than the others, hardly two hundred yards in diameter.

At the upper end of the largest dahia we found a numerous flock of flamingoes, wading in the shallow water, and marching gravely about like so many soldiers in a white and red uniform. They were too wary to let us come within shot, and the banks of the lake not affording the cover of even a stunted bush, we were obliged to content ourselves with watching their manœuvres, and when, alarmed at our nearer approach, they rose screaming into the air, their long necks extended in front, and legs stretched out behind, gave them the appearance of sticks borne along by enormous wings at a rapid rate. As they passed over head, a ball fired into the midst changed the direction of their flight, and as each bird turned from its course the beautiful crimson

of its glossy plumage shone more brilliantly than before, then after circling twice round, each time higher and higher, as if unwilling to leave a favourite spot, they darted off in a direct line towards another of the lakes some miles distant. We fired a few shots at the water-fowl scattered over the lakes in great number, but they were shy, and very little execution was done among them. On the way back to the douar, several birds of the bustard species were fallen in with, and three shot.

At eleven o'clock we regained the camp, and made our second breakfast on the cold mutton from yesterday's feast, and couscousoo. The rejoicings, on account of the marriage, were still going on in front of the tent, behind which, at a little distance, ours was placed. Not wishing to offend any of their prejudices, we had hitherto kept aloof from this part of the camp, and we were as much surprised as pleased when an Arab, seeing two or three remaining in the tent, the others having gone out to shoot, came and invited us to witness the dancing and fantazia.

The brigadier of our spahis, who could speak

a little French, explained the proceedings. A curtain drawn across the door of the tent concealed the bride, who, closely veiled, sat within, surrounded by women. On the outside, between four and five hundred people were collected, and a clear space was kept in the middle for the dancers by two men with drawn swords, who vigorously applied, right and left, the flat of the blade to all who pressed too forward. On one side of the ring squatted the band, consisting of two men, with instruments like flageolets, and a drummer who occasionally accompanied the music with his voice. In the centre was a middle-aged woman, dressed in the usual dark blue cotton garments, but decked with all her ornaments—ear-rings, bracelets, and a necklace, to which sundry charms and amulets, teeth of wild beasts, verses of the Koran sewn up in little bags, and various other odds and ends, considered as protections from the evil eye, were suspended; a large circular brooch of silver or white metal (the same in form as those used by the Scotch Highlanders) confined the loose folds across her bosom; and a small looking-glass, set in

metal, dangled conveniently at the end of a string of sufficient length to allow of her admiring her charms in detail. Her face was uncovered, and her features were harsh and disagreeable, except the eyes, which were large and expressive, with that peculiar, lustrous appearance, given by the use of mineral paint. Her feet were hardly visible from the length of her dress, and her finger nails, together with the palms of the hands, were stained with henna.

As soon as we had taken our stand in the front row, the music, which had ceased for a few minutes, struck up, and the lady in the midst commenced her performances ; inclining her head languishingly from side to side, she beat time with her feet, raising each foot alternately from the ground with a jerking action, as if she had been standing on a hot floor, at the same time twisting about her body, with a slow movement of the hands and arms. Several others succeeded her, and danced in the same style, with an equal want of grace. A powerful inducement to exert themselves was not wanting, for one of them more than once received

Some tolerably severe blows, both from a stick and the flat of the sword ; what the reason was I do not know, but suppose that either she was lazy or danced badly.

While the dancing was going on the spectators were not idle ; armed with guns, pistols, and blunderbusses with enormous bell mouths, an irregular fire was kept up. Advancing a step or two into the circle, so as to show off before the whole party, an Arab would present his weapon at a friend opposite, throwing himself into a graceful attitude, then suddenly dropping the muzzle at the instant of pulling the trigger, the charge struck the ground close to the feet of the person aimed at. After each report the women set up a long continued shrill cry of *lu-lu, lu-lu*, and the musicians redoubled their efforts. The advance of one man is usually the signal for others to come forward at the same time, all anxious to surpass their friends and neighbours in dexterity and grace. Ten or a dozen men being crowded into a small space, sometimes not more than six paces wide, brandishing their arms, and, excited by the mimic combat, firing often at random, it is not to be wondered at if acci-

dents happen occasionally to the actors or bystanders.

Among the most remarkable, a fine athletic youth had particularly attracted my attention by the ease and gracefulness of his movements. Each time he came forward, after loading, I had marked his excitement increasing, and now carried away by it, he seemed to forget the peaceful nature of the meeting, for, levelling his gun deliberately at the Arab standing next one of the French officers and myself, he fired with the muzzle within a couple of feet of his body ; the man fell, rolled over and over, and lay as if dead. On examination of the wound, there was no fear to be entertained for his life, as he was hit near the hip, and a double fold of his bernous, which was burnt through, had deadened the force of the powder. It was nevertheless an ugly looking wound, as pieces of the woollen bernous and some grains of the coarse powder had been driven into the burnt flesh. The rest of the party did not care much about it, and the wounded man's wife, instead of looking after her husband, rushed up to the man who had shot him, and, assisted by some female friends, opened

upon him a torrent of abuse with such evident fluency of tongue and command of language, that, after endeavouring in vain to get in a word or two, he fairly turned tail and walked off.

I asked in the evening how the wounded man was, and they answered that it would not signify, he would be well in a week or so. Ten minutes afterwards he came himself limping to our tent, evidently much more distressed at the serious injury his berrous had received, than at his own hurt, and exhibiting the big holes burnt in his garment with a most woebegone expression of countenance.

The same rejoicings continued all the afternoon ; and even when our numbers were increased by the return of the shooting party, no objections were made to our going to and fro as often as we pleased. It is the custom always to make a present to the musicians, which I understood was handed over to the bridegroom ; so perhaps the five-franc piece given by each of us may have had some effect.

The actual ceremonies of an Arab marriage are very simple. The young man

having made his choice, the two fathers meet and settle what sum is to be paid for the bride; this important point arranged, a contract is drawn up and signed, the money paid, the bridegroom goes for his wife and brings her home. A divorce is a still easier matter, the husband gives his reason for desiring it (frequently a very trifling one), and the woman returns to her father, who however, is entitled to keep the sum he originally received at the time of the marriage.

Owing to their habits of life, the Arab women enjoy a greater degree of comparative liberty than falls to the lot of females of other Mahometan nations. Constantly employed in the severest domestic labour in the field, as well as at home, concealment of the person, as practised by the Moors and inhabitants of cities, is impossible in the douar, neither do they attempt it. The face of a Bedoueen woman is seldom covered, except when she accompanies her husband into the vicinity of a town, or meets strangers unexpectedly. The men of the tribe are thus well acquainted with the features and dispositions of the women, and althoug^u

considered only as slaves and beasts of burden, created to administer to the wants and pleasures of man, instances frequently occur where marriage is the result of a mutual attachment, engendered and fostered by the opportunities this freedom affords.

That this has always been the case, the numberless romances and songs, in which the Arabs delight, sufficiently prove. Their theme is always of love or war; heroic actions rewarded by youth and beauty; a lover bewailing the stony-heartedness of his mistress; the dangers and misfortunes passed through by some ill-starred pair before the goal of happiness is reached; the fierce flame of passion, the pangs of jealousy, and the bitterness of disappointment, painted with truth and spirit—are the subjects of their verse. Constancy is praised; high and honourable deeds are recited as worthy of imitation; and however slightly these sentiments may be felt, they are still sufficient occasionally to influence men gifted by nature with pure and generous feelings, which, lying dormant, require but a touch to awaken into life.

It is not, however, to be supposed that

even after a marriage of inclination and love on both sides, the social condition of the woman is improved. Her husband still considers her as placed a step lower than himself in the scale of creation, and made for his pleasure and convenience. But although such is her servile condition, the Arab woman is not unhappy ; accustomed from her infancy to see her mother, sisters, and friends toiling from morning till night, and assisting in their labours as soon as she is able, she feels she is filling her appointed lot, and quietly enjoys those few pleasures which fall to her share.

In the course of this afternoon Ben-Aouda voluntarily brought a case for the decision of the officer in charge of the Arab affairs for the Boghar district, which he might easily have settled on his own authority. A squabble had arisen in a neighbouring tribe under the Agha's jurisdiction, between the Kaid and an Arab, concerning the amount of tribute to be paid by the latter. The Arab, dissatisfied with his Kaid's decision, after a furious war of words, set out for the purpose of carrying his complaint before the Agha. The Kaid endeavoured to stop him,

first by threats, and then by force ; a fight ensued, and in the mêlée the Arab succeeded in making his escape with a sabre wound across his right hand, that, severing the bone of his middle finger, left it hanging by a strip of skin. It was a case of no importance, and easily settled by ordering the Kaïd to pay a certain sum, both as a punishment, and to recompense the wounded man, who seemed quite satisfied with the sentence. I only mention this circumstance, trivial in itself, as an instance that proves the submission of the tribes of the Little Desert to the French authority ; any interference with the power of the chiefs in their own tribes having been always regarded with the greatest jealousy.

The Agha having heard from the spahis that we were English, expressed great curiosity to know how it happened that we were travelling with the French ? He evidently seemed to consider the English and French as natural enemies, and, I think, was not quite satisfied that we told the truth, when we repeated, more than once, that the two nations were friends ; as he recurred several times to the subject, placing his forefingers

side by side, and saying, “Ingleese, Fran-
ceese, Kiff-kiff”—an expressive gesture, in
common use among the Arabs, implying that
the persons or things compared are as alike
as one finger is to the other, and was now
used by Ben-Aouda to represent the existence
of an intimate alliance between France and
England. This feeling seemed* to be uni-
versal among the Arab tribes both of Algeria
and Tunis, and in the former, astonishment
was frequently expressed at our travelling,
and being on such friendly terms with,
the French.

The music continued long after dark ;
and in the middle of a poem, chanted in a
loud voice, with a rather noisy accompani-
ment, and which had already lasted at least
an hour, I fell asleep.

March 19th.—The weather, which the
evening before appeared threatening, had
fulfilled its promise of a change. During
the night a cold piercing wind swept over
the surface of the desert, and frequent
showers, driven by the blast in eddies round
the tent, found an easy entrance at the open
side.

The morning was gloomy ; a dull, leaden

sky, with scudding clouds, and a bilious-looking sun, exhibited the douar in a different aspect from that of the previous day. The circle of dark, low tents, sombre in appearance at any time, seemed lower and darker than before ; the flocks—cold, wet, and miserable, after the stormy night—stood cowering together ; the horses—some of the most valuable protected by blankets—fared better, but their drooping heads, damp tangled manes, and draggled tails, told also of the discomforts of the night. The Arabs went quietly about their work, and the only beings in the camp who looked thoroughly comfortable were a brace of magnificent greyhounds belonging to Ben-Aouda, who, having shared his tent, were walking about, carefully clothed, to protect them from the ill effects of a raw wet morning. At half-past six we set out on our return to Boghar, taking leave of Ben-Aouda, who was profuse in his protestations of happiness at having had such a party as his guests.

Arab hospitality, of which in England we have such exaggerated notions, is not of that romantic kind which refuses to receive a recompense from those who can afford it.

The Agha would most certainly not have accepted, and probably would have been much offended, if we had offered him money as payment for the expense of entertaining our party, but he would have been equally disappointed if we had taken our departure without (as we were informed was the proper etiquette) giving a present to a servant, who, when the guests are gone, hands it over to his master. This custom refers more to foreign travellers than to hospitalities exercised one to another. On no account is a stranger, who claims food and shelter in the name of God, turned away from the douar. If of consequence, he is welcomed by the Kaïd or a wealthy member of the tribe, his horses fed, his baggage placed in a place of safety, and a sheep or lamb, killed in his honour, furnishes a special feast. If poor, he partakes of the family fare, and departs freely in the morning, expressing his thanks in some of the pious phrases so constantly on the lips of a Mahometan.

That this difference should be made is right. The Arab who shelters and shares his meal with a fellow-countryman, may shortly himself stand in need of similar

assistance, and perhaps require it from the hands of his quondam guest. With travellers like ourselves it is otherwise ; their arrival deranges the whole tribe ; they are not satisfied with a little, they expect to live on the fat of the land, and there does not exist a shadow of a chance that they will have it in their power to requite their hospitality at a future period. On the score of honesty alone they ought to pay for what they have received and be thankful.

Directing our course towards the morass, and skirting it for a mile and a half, we crossed the sluggish stream, which, thick with mud, crept through its centre, interrupting the breakfast of a large flock of flamingoes, which were busily employed feeding in the shallow water of an adjoining lake. For three hours we rode steadily over a monotonous succession of low barren hillocks of sand and gravel, intermixed with a scanty herbage that, brought into being by the winter's rain, struggled successfully with the sterile soil for a short existence. On nearing the Cheleeff the vegetation became more abundant, and a green carpet of turf, sprinkled with delicate little flowers of pale

blue, purple, and the liveliest crimson, covered the banks of the river.

Keeping by the river side, we passed numerous tracts of land under cultivation, with the young blades of corn just peeping above ground. Some of these patches were several acres in extent. The art of husbandry among the Arabs has not advanced beyond the earliest stage. Where necessary, the land is cleared of shrubs and bushes by burning, the surface is scratched by a plough of the most primitive description, the seed is thinly sown, and Nature is left to herself. If the crop is good, so much the better; if a failure, it is the will of God; and, trusting to Providence, the Arab follows exactly the same system next year. The fields are unenclosed, and when the properties of different tribes or families adjoin, the boundaries are marked by stones, laid down at the corners, which are never known to be moved, however far the proprietor may have wandered in the interval between sowing and the harvest.

After the harvest the grain is stored in "silos," deep pits dug in the ground, which, when full, are carefully covered over, so as to

exclude the air and preserve their contents for years. When once exposed to the action of the air the corn soon spoils, and therefore it is the usual practice, when a silo is opened, for the owner to distribute the grain among his neighbours, who repay him in kind when it becomes necessary to commence upon another store.

Since the earlier period of the French occupation, the capture of the silos and the destruction of the growing crops have been the principal, and, in many instances, the sole mode of punishing an insurgent tribe. Retiring with their families and flocks into the almost inaccessible valleys of the Atlas, they bid defiance to the troops, and thus securing all their moveable property in a place of safety, leave in their granaries and cultivated land the only vulnerable points. With the agricultural tribes, the fear of this chastisement, which many of them have felt more than once, acts as a powerful check. Deprived of a principal source of their subsistence for the year, their wives and little ones suffer from want; the trade with the Bedoueens is destroyed, as they have lost their chief article

of commerce ; and, after the vain struggle, they either yield to the terms of their conquerors, or abandon the land that their forefathers won with the sword, and retire into the depths of the desert, secure from the pursuit of their enemies.

We continued along the bank of the Cheleeff, diverging only from its course when obliged, by the deeply worn beds of the tributary streams, to seek a spot convenient for passing. Under Boghar, on the east bank of the river, our route lay through an Arab burying ground. Simple in their habits during life, their manner of interment partakes of the same character. On the summit of a neighbouring mount, a low wall of loose stones enclosed a spot of ground, from which several small flags were flying, to mark the sanctity of the place, and a narrow heap, with a rough stone at either end, pointed out the last resting-place of each desert child.

Ascending the hill, we reached the fort at two o'clock. The commandant expecting us back, was on the look out, and had seen our party approaching as we wound up the hill. In his quarters, turned into a mess-

room for the occasion, the fire, heaped with billets of pine and fragrant juniper, blazed merrily ; the cloth was laid in due order on a couple of tables the length of the room ; a whole regiment of bottles, some tall and thin, some short and fat, but all full, were placed at proper intervals, and from the half open door of the adjoining kitchen issued a most savoury odour, all uniting in assuring us of a breakfast as hearty and as warm as our welcome. A good breakfast when there is a good appetite, is a pleasant affair at any time ; but it is doubly so when, as in this case, it becomes a matter of rather more importance than the mere every day act of swallowing a certain quantity at a certain hour in the morning. We had had an eight hours ride and had tasted nothing since the previous evening but a handful of dry dates at the commencement of our journey.

CHAPTER VIII.

Afternoon walk—A soldier's grave—Arab patients—Lepers—Leave Boghar—Government lands—“Les ravines de la peine”—Ancient cities—Sour Djouab and Sour Ghouzelan—Search for the douar—The Abides—Idiot boy—Scorpion-eating—Sect of the Aïsaoua—Description of a commemorative fête of that sect held in Algiers.

LATE in the afternoon I strolled out alone, and wandered among the heights above the fort until driven homewards by the wind and rain, that had been for some time past increasing in violence. Crossing a hollow in the side of the mountain, just beneath the fort, my path led me near a solitary tree growing in the centre of a slight enclosure, within which, a few black crosses of rude workmanship, each raised at the head of a narrow mound, told that I stood by the home of the dead.

In France I loved the custom that decks with flowers the graves of relatives and friends, but never did it appeal so strongly to my feelings as in the little graveyard of Boghar. Placed by some comrades hand, on a cross marked only with initials and a date, hung a faded wreath of wild flowers. The rain was falling heavily, the wind whistled mournfully through the branches of the solitary tree, and each fresh blast that blew, seemed striving to tear the frail withered emblem of affection from the cross to which it clung. It told its own tale. Probably the favourite of his comrades as of his home, for it was the only grave so honoured ; what tears may have been shed for him who rests beneath, by parents, kindred, friends, who scarce knowing the spot where he sleeps, know but too well he died far far away from those who loved him ; no dear familiar faces gathered around his dying bed ; no brother laid him in the grave ; no sister hangs a garland of "immortelles" on his tomb, and fondly imagines she is communing in spirit with the dead as she breathes her prayer for his eternal happiness : he lies in a foreign land, and a few

wild flowers, twined by the rough hand of a brother soldier, are the sole offerings of the living to the dead.

The evening passed quickly away, the dinner cast the memory of the breakfast into the shade, and never was a merrier little party got together than the one which this night assembled around the punch-bowl (filled by the experienced hand of the commandant himself), with the Atlas between it and the world. We slept in our old quarters, the hospital.

The following morning, before we started, four Arab patients came to the medical officer for advice; two were common cases, of no interest, but the others, a mother and child, were lepers. I had never before had an opportunity of examining a case of leprosy; but after having witnessed these, I was better able to understand the necessity of the stringent laws of Holy Writ concerning lepers, which had hitherto seemed to me so disproportionate, in the excess of their severity towards the afflicted, with regard to the evils to be apprehended from the intercourse of the healthy with the diseased.

The mother, though suffering herself, was

scarcely an object of pity when seen by the side of her child, a poor little girl of six years of age. Red, dry-looking ulcers, and blotches of thickened skin, rough and scaly, spotted her body and limbs ; her ears and neck were likewise affected, as also the lips and gums. A more pitiable object it is hardly possible to conceive ; a cure was impossible, and all that could be done was to endeavour for a time to arrest the progress of the disease, and mitigate its symptoms. She submitted without a murmur to the doctor, whilst he washed her sores with a solution of caustic ; it must have been painful, but she was inured to suffering, and when he applied the burning liquid to her ulcerated mouth, her little bosom heaved convulsively, an involuntary motion contracted her slender fingers, but she did not utter a sound ; the tears gathered gradually in her large dark eyes, and as if ashamed of even this, she turned and hid her face in the folds of her mother's dress.

At half-past eight we mounted and rode down the hill, escorted thus far by all the officers of the garrison, from whom we parted more like old friends of as many

years acquaintance as it had been days, and often since have we recalled to mind our excursion into the Little Desert, and our visit to Boghar.

Taking a north-easterly direction, we crossed the Cheleeff for the last time, and keeping at the base of the mountains to our right, followed the course of a narrow valley, through which ran a tributary stream. On either side of the water the arable land is the property of the French government, who hold it by virtue of having succeeded to all the public property of the late Dey; but how he or his predecessors acquired it I could not discover. The Arabs pay a certain rent, in addition to the regular annual tax of ten per cent. Where the land was not cultivated, the ground was covered with a profusion of the wild artichoke, a plant of which the camel is excessively fond.

During the morning we passed over a part of the route, intersected by numerous ravines deep and narrow, extending from the steep sides of the mountains to the river, and sometimes not farther than a hundred yards apart. Their sides are steep and slippery after rain, which converts the soil

into greasy mud. Fortunately there had not been more than four-and-twenty hours wet weather, or difficult as we found the track, it might have been impassable. The French troops have named them "Les ravines de la peine," for when a column has to march by this route after rain, a battalion is sent on in advance, to render them passable by laying down trees and brushwood, which the next floods carry away.

At twelve o'clock, the clouds that had been hanging about the mountain tops, began to descend, and the rain commenced, and lasted till night. A copious supply of fresh water fell from above, but it was a long time before we could find any below, as the water in the river was so salt as to be unfit for use. At last, after a long search, we discovered a collection of huts of the most wretched description, where an equally wretched woman, a walking mass of rags and filth, shewed us a brook near at hand, the water of which, though brackish, was drinkable; and here we made our mid-day halt.

An hour's ride hence brought us to a point where a road branched off to the eastward, leading to the ruins of two Roman

towns, discovered some time ago by the French, and which had been visited by General Marey when moving with a force about the district. Captain Martenot taking a great interest in the subject, had drawn up and forwarded an account of the ruins to France. He describes the one nearest to Medeah, from which it is distant fourteen leagues, as the remains of a town that had been a military post of some consequence, as the fortifications testify; but the hand of destruction had been so heavily laid upon it, that, except from the size of the hewn stones and the extent of its foundations, it was impossible to tell what temples or public buildings had stood within its walls. It is now known to the Arabs by the name of Sour Djouab, and was probably built in the earlier part of the third century. The other, twenty-five leagues from Medeah, and still more to the eastward, was also a fortified post; it had been a place of more importance, and the ruins were of greater extent. Many curious tombs were found, with inscriptions tolerably perfect; and, amongst others, the tomb of an Empress Julia. They are the ruins of the Roman city

of Colonia Auziensis ; and as the name of the Emperor Pertinax occurs, the city probably dates from the end of the second century. Its Arab name is Sour Ghouzelan. Leaving the regular track leading to Medeah, we struck in among the hills, to look for the douar of the tribe of the Abides. A thick fog was now added to the drizzling rain, and after a rough ride over rocks and stones, and through thickets of brushwood, we arrived at the place where the douar—was not. It was a clear case—the tribe had moved to another spot within the last few days ; but now came the question—“ Where are they ? ”—as the prospect of spending the night “ al fresco,” in such stormy weather, was, to say the least, not agreeable.

Evening was drawing nigh, and we had no time to spare for discussion ; so, setting forth again, we kept upon the higher part of the ridge, and sending two of the spahis different ways, proceeded ourselves in the direction the brigadier thought the most likely. We had gone forward for a mile and a half, when a mounted Arab fell in with us. One of the spahis had found the

douar, and men had been sent off to bring us in. The tents were snugly pitched in a wood of ilex, juniper and cork trees, occupying the face of a mountain at the head of a rich and well-watered valley.

It was five o'clock when we arrived at the douar. The Kaïd, Bel-Aïd, who had gone out himself in search of us, came in half an hour afterwards, mounted on a splendid mare—the finest animal, excepting General Marey's horse, I had as yet seen in Algeria. Being near the towns, we were served with coffee “à l'Arabe,” prepared in the same way as in the East, with the addition of sugar; the use of which has become very general throughout Northern Africa.

While drinking our coffee, we observed a boy who, leaning with folded arms upon a stick, watched every motion that we made. The boy's countenance was disgustingly repulsive, and the vacant, yet cunning expression of his features, more those of a brute than of a human being, as well as the form of his mis-shapen head, stamped him as an idiot from his birth. A tattered berious hung loosely on his shoulders, and, cold and wet as the evening was, he stood staring in at

the entrance of the tent, while the other Arabs, whom curiosity had at first attracted, gathered round the fire a few yards distant.

Knowing that the Arabs regard as saints, madmen, and those whose intellects are affected, I paid no more attention to him, and left the tent for a few minutes. When I returned, the boy was still there, fixed in the same attitude ; and I was told that he had just made a display of his sanctity, by holding in his naked hand a live scorpion, and then eating it, without suffering in the least from its poisonous sting. As he was standing close to the tent, there could be no doubt but that he performed the disgusting feat of devouring the reptile, but I was rather incredulous as to the fact of the sting not having been removed.

We were discussing this point, when, guessing that he was the object of our conversation, he went away, and returned almost immediately with another scorpion in his hand. Taking a piece of stick, I examined it most closely in his uncovered hand, and perfectly satisfied myself that it had not been deprived of its sting, or injured in any way. The scorpion was of a tolerable size—

upwards of two inches long—quite lively, and able to inflict a very painful wound, the effects of which would be apparent almost instantly, and last for a considerable time. Standing over the boy, I watched him narrowly, to see that he did not pinch off the tail of the reptile, or play any trick; but, half raising his hand to his head, he put his mouth to his open palm, and I saw distinctly the scorpion writhing between his teeth as he took it up, and heard the crunching of its shelly covering, as he deliberately chewed, and then swallowed it. Neither his hands nor his mouth suffered in the slightest degree, and after a short interval he produced and ate another in the same way, which I also examined.

The boy, since the early period when the infirmity of his mind became apparent, had been brought up a member of the religious sect of the Aïsaoua, who claim the privilege, by the special gift of God to their founder, of being proof against the venom of reptiles, and the effects of fire. The present chief of the sect resides near Medeah, and his disciples are to be found scattered over the

whole of Northern Africa ; they are held in a certain degree of reverence, but do not possess much influence. Captain Martenot gave us these details, and referred me, for further information on the subject, to the following account of a grand festival of the Aïsaoua, written by an officer, who was an eye-witness of the scenes he so graphically describes.

" In the court of a small Moorish house in the Rue de l'Empereur, Algiers, about sixty Arabs and Moors were assembled. Four standards—one red and yellow, and the other three red and green—were suspended from the columns of the court, over the heads of the chiefs of the sect. These were the standards of the Marabout, Mohammed-ben-Aïssa. In the middle, a long wax taper, placed in an old black chandelier, alone afforded light to the assembly, and cast its uncertain, glimmering rays, into the gloomy corners of the building. The upper gallery was filled with women, covered with their white veils, leaving visible only their black eyes, and their eyebrows stained with henna. Bou-Chama, by whose invitation I attended the festival, remained by my side, and

explained the origin of the religious sect to which he belonged, in nearly the following terms :—

“ ‘ Four or five hundred years ago a celebrated Marabout lived in the province of Oran. His name was Mohammed-ben-Aïssa, and having succeeded in gathering together a certain number of disciples, he wandered with them over the face of the land, sometimes in the Tell, and at other times plunging into the wilds of the Sahara. One day, during his wanderings, he lost his way in the desert. The provisions were exhausted, and his faithful followers, sinking from weakness, were on the point of perishing with hunger, when Ben-Aïssa, stretching his hands towards heaven, implored the mercy of the God of Mohammed. ‘ Lord,’ cried he, ‘ thou alone art able to save us. Take pity upon us, and cause whatsoever we may touch to change for us into wholesome food.’ At these words, seized with sudden inspiration, his disciples gathered stones, serpents, scorpions, &c., satisfied their hunger, and suffered no harm. We,’ continued Bou-Chama, ‘ followers of this illustrious Marabout, have inherited the same privilege ; and it is in

commemoration of this miracle, and to perpetuate it, that we have now assembled together. By our prayers we obtain the cure of the sick, and draw down the mercies of heaven upon our newly-born children.' After these words Bou-Chama left me and joined his brethren; the rites were commencing.

"The prescribed ablutions having been performed, the Aïsaoua standing in meditative postures, recited eight times the Mussulman profession of faith—'I bear witness that there is none other god than God, and that Mohammed is his Prophet.' In their voices there was something grave and solemn, which was most impressive. The Mokaddam, or chief of the sect, then chanted a prayer for all Mussulmen, and called down upon them the benedictions of the Prophet. At the end of each prayer the Mokaddam stopped, and the Aïsaoua, lifting up their voices in turn, asked health for one, or the blessing of maternity for another, and the chorus then taking it up, addressed a prayer to God, in accordance with the favour demanded. Incense was every now and then thrown on a brazier of live coals, and the

chorus repeated in a loud voice, ‘*Es-salah! Es-salah!*’ They then all seated themselves in a circle, leaving a vacant space in the centre of the court. The Mokaddam and his chief assistants took their places opposite to me, and at their side a dozen Aïsaoua arranged themselves, each armed with an enormous tambourine, which they beat in cadence, while the chorus vociferated a song in honour of Ben-Aïssa. There was in these songs an undefinable spirit of frantic rage, which produced in me a certain impression of terror. I saw some of these fanatics roll enormous serpents in the hollow of their tambourines, while livid adders reared their hideous heads from the hoods of their ber-nous, and, dropping to the floor, glided over the marble as cold as themselves. In spite of the horror which I felt at this sight, curiosity got the better of my disgust, and I remained.

“I must confess, however, that my heart beat violently; the dim obscurity, the infernal music, the women, shrouded in their white veils, appearing like phantoms risen from the grave, all prepared my imagination for the horrid spectacle of a festival of the Aïsaoua.

"At the sound of this barbarous music, one of the party rushed into the circle with a frightful cry and extended arms, as if possessed by the evil one. He made the round several times, roaring hoarsely and savagely, then, as if compelled by a supernatural power, he began to dance to the sound of the ambourines and drums. He was then clothed in a white bernous, and his "shasheah" (red woollen cap) being taken off, the long hair left on the top of an Arab's head, fell over his shoulders. He then commenced his '*zeekr*.' The *zeekr* is a species of religious dance, which consists in jerking the head from right to left, so that it touches the shoulders alternately. The whole body of the Aïsaoua was in motion, his eyes soon became red and bloodshot, and the veins of his neck blue and distended; nevertheless he continued his terrific dance.

"On a sudden two others rose up, and, with savage yells, joined the first. The three, excited by each other, redoubled their stampings and the motion of their heads, working themselves up into a state of frenzy impossible to describe. Now calling for red hot iron, small shovels, the broad part the

size of the hand, with long iron handles, were given to them. Seizing each one, these enthusiasts, placing one knee on the ground, applied their hands, and even tongues, to the red hot metal. One of them, more madly excited than his companions, placed the brightest portion of the instrument between his teeth, and held it in that position for upwards of thirty seconds.

“ Let not the reader think that I exaggerate; I witnessed all that I relate ; and, in order to impress the scene stronger upon my memory, the performer of this last act placed himself directly opposite to me with a lighted taper in his hand. It is impossible for me to give a reason for what I saw, but I cannot disbelieve it ; I smelt the stench of the burnt flesh, and when I afterwards touched their hands and feet, I found only a fresh and uninjured skin. The sight of one old man, nearly sixty-five years of age, gave me great pain ; he grasped the red hot iron, and placing it on his leg, allowed it to remain there until a whitish smoke arose, which filled the whole house with its poisonous odour.

“ These dances lasted, in this manner, for

the space of an hour. Notwithstanding the noise produced by the songs and the tambourines, the painful rattle in the throats of these mad fanatics could be distinguished amidst the din ; at last, exhausted by fatigue, they fell backwards, one after the other, and lay senseless and motionless on the ground ; the songs ceased, and nothing broke the solemn silence but the sound of their heavy breathings. A man, whose task it was to attend the half-dead wretches, now advanced, and placing his foot successively on the pit of their stomachs, pressed their sides strongly, kneaded their limbs, and caused them to revive.

" The dance recommenced, four fresh Aïsaoua rushed into the circle, and were soon in the same state of frenzy as their predecessors, striking their heads with the red hot shovels, and stamping upon them with their naked feet. Then, in their delirium, imagining that they were transformed into camels and lions, they uttered the cries of the animals they represented, and feigned a combat between them ; their mouths foamed and their eyes sparkled with rage. The Mokaddam now presented to them a leaf of

cactus, of which the thorns, an inch in length and sharp as a needle, made me tremble. At this sight the combat ceased, the Aïsaoua threw themselves upon the cactus, they tore and ground it between their teeth, making the air resound with a hoarse noise resembling the horrid cries of an enraged camel. At this moment the women, placed in the upper gallery, raised their dismal cry of *lu-lu, lu-lu, lu-lu*.

“ This frightful scene was only the prelude to all the horrors I was about to witness. Towards eleven o’clock the songs ceased, and coffee and couscousoo were brought in, of which I found it impossible to partake. The repast over, they recited a prayer before re-commencing their dance ; and, on the musicians beginning to strike their enormous tambourines, seven or eight of the disciples rose, howling dreadfully, and dressed in white like their predecessors, began to perform the zeekr.

“ My acquaintance, Bou-Chama, was of this party, and, taking a bundle of small wax tapers, he placed first his hand, and then his arm, face and neck, in the flames. His features, when thus lit up, as they appeared

from one moment to another through the varying flames, had quite a demoniacal appearance.

“ In the meantime, a Negro had amused himself by placing live coals in his mouth, which, as he breathed, burnt brightly, and sent forth a thousand sparks. Without having been there, it is impossible to realize the terrific sight I had before my eyes. Opposite me, within two paces, was the Negro, whose glowing mouth displayed itself in a black and hideous face, his head, with its single lock of crisp woolly hair, vibrating rapidly from side to side, and around me the hellish music, the convulsive stampings, and the frightful cries of the dancers.

“ The Negro was now in a state of the most furious excitement. Swallowing the still burning contents of his mouth, he seized a large scorpion, full of life and venom; placing it on his arm, he irritated the reptile in every possible manner, pinching it, putting it near the taper, and burning one of its claws. The enraged animal darted his sting into the offered hand, the Negro smiled, and, raising the scorpion to his mouth, I heard it crack between his teeth,

and, as he swallowed it, I turned my head aside in horror. The reader, perhaps, supposes that the scorpion was deprived of his sting, but I had ocular demonstration to the contrary; nay, more, I might have brought one from the Boudjareeah myself and given it with my own hand, as many have done who have been admitted to these ‘Hadrah.’

“A yatagan was now brought, the point wrapped in a handkerchief, and two men held it horizontally about three feet from the ground. On seeing this, a man rose from his seat and commenced his zeekr, then, uncovering his breast, he sprang with all his weight on the naked blade; it seemed as if his body would have been cut in two by such a blow. He remained, however, with his bare breast on the sharp edge of the sabre, balancing himself with his feet, in an horizontal position, and tranquilly continuing his zeekr.

“Meanwhile the four other Aïsaoua continued their furious dance, beating their heads with the iron shovels brought to a red heat. To these, three others soon joined themselves, grasping in each hand a living

adder, with which they struck their bodies. As they danced, the serpents wound themselves about their limbs, hissing horribly. Then seizing them, some placed them in their mouths, so as only to permit the head of the reptile to escape ; one even forced the adder to bite his tongue, and, leaving it thus suspended, continued his dance. Others squeezed them between their teeth, to increase their rage, and the irritated reptiles, in their desperate struggles to escape, twined around their necks, and, hissing, reared themselves above the heads of their tormentors.

“ Excited by the spectacle before their eyes, and by the increasing noise of the music, the Aïsaoua rose in a body and rushed to take a part in the dance.

“ Then commenced a scene which words cannot describe. Twenty Aïsaoua, clothed in white berrous, with dishevelled hair and haggard eyes, mad with excitement and fanaticism, bathed in sweat, and grasping serpents in their hands, stamping, dancing, and convulsively shaking their heads, each starting vein swollen and distended with blood. The women, like phantoms, assisting

in this scene, lit only by a pale and solitary taper, uttered in a piercing tone their shrill cries of *lu-lu*, *lu-lu*, *lu-lu*; this, mixed with strange songs, hoarse sounds, and the hollow rattle in the throat of each Aïsaoua, as he fell exhausted and senseless, formed altogether a scene so totally repulsive to human nature, that it seemed in truth a feast of hell.

“ Such dreadful exertions could not, however, last long; by degrees the number of dancers diminished, as one after another they sank under the fatigue, and their panting bodies strewed the marble pavement of the court.

“ The feast of the Aïsaoua was over.”

CHAPTER IX.

The tribe of the Abides—Their connexion with the Government—Snow-storm—Ben Chekao—Travelling in the Atlas—Return to Medeah—General Marey—The lion and the plaid—A Moorish bath—Leave Medeah—Exorbitant bill—Copper mines—Their produce—Ancient workings—Crosses—The canteen—Walk over the Col de Mouzaïa—The Cheeffa—Bleedah and return to Algiers.

THE Abides, in whose douar we were passing the night, differ only from the other tribes, in the relation in which they stand with the French Government. It was part of the policy of the late rulers of Algeria, to exempt certain tribes in each district from the payment of the annual tribute, upon the condition that the disposable force of these tribes should always be in readiness to serve, when desired. This practice has been continued by the French

authorities ; and the Abides, one of these tribes under the old régime, retain, on the same condition as formerly, their privilege of exemption, and also receive pay when employed, at the rate of fifteen francs a month. They form a species of hereditary militia, and in case of robberies, dissensions between tribes, or partial outbreaks, have in many instances, been found extremely useful.

The night was bitterly cold, but fortunately for us, the tent was new, and of a better material than usual, with a fourth side, which closed us in all round. We rose in the morning at day-break, cold and stiff, notwithstanding the comfortable tent, for the rain, during the night, had turned to snow, which had fallen to the depth of two inches, whilst the thermometer stood at one degree above the freezing point.

A glorious fire, and hot coffee, soon brought us round, and at half-past six we faced the snow, which was still falling, and set out for Medeah. In a short time we regained the road that we had left the previous evening, and kept it for three hours through a country, that even in tolerable

weather would have been rendered beautiful by its deep wooded glens and running streams, wild valleys, rocks and mountains dotted with evergreen oaks and cork trees, whose rugged bark, furrowed with seams and gaping cracks, showed less the effects of a green old age, than the swelling increase of the sturdy trunk within.

We had, however, enough to do to take care of ourselves, without wasting our energies in fancying how beautiful the scenery would be, if the weather were fine. It continued snowing hard, and the high wind causing it to drift, the track, in many places, was covered, hiding the loose stones, and holes filled with mud, through which our horses scrambled at every step.

At last we arrived at Ben Chekao's house (for a house it was, being built of stones and lime, with a tiled roof), but instead of every thing being prepared for us, we found ourselves unexpected guests. The messenger ordered on in the morning from the douar, to give him notice of our probable arrival, not having performed his errand, Ben Chekao rushed off immediately to get breakfast ready, much annoyed to find that he would not be

able to entertain us in a proper manner, he being devoted to the French interest, in hopes of getting an appointment, and, being a wealthy man, he especially prides himself upon his cuisine.

His household certainly exerted themselves, for in the course of an hour, couscousoo and beghir, with milk and coffee, were brought in. The couscousoo was rather different from any that we had previously partaken of, inasmuch as it appeared to have been manufactured with clean hands, all we had hitherto met with having a most suspicious looking brown tint, which it was impossible to help referring to the state of the hands that had formed the grains of which it was composed.

At noon we again mounted, and traversed a worse road in worse weather. The horses slipped and tumbled about; and at one spot where a steep slippery clay bank had to be crossed diagonally, we all fell except Captain Martenot and one of the Spahis. There was no helping ourselves; on the left was the rocky wall of the mountain side, which it would have been difficult to climb on foot, and on the right the narrow bank

sloped to the verge of a deep precipice. We went at it one at a time, and as our horses all fell, we were in the same plight, and could not laugh at each other ; but it was decidedly satisfactory when the brigadier, so vain of himself, his horse, and his horsemanship, rolled in the greasy mud. As we drew nearer to Medeah, the snow ceased, and was replaced by heavy rain. The last steep hill was with difficulty ascended by our wearied animals ; and at half-past three we rode through the gate of Medeah.

Having been invited, before we started for the desert, to dine with the General on the day of our return, we were, at six o'clock, seated round his table, with nothing to remind us that we were in Africa, or that there was an Arab within a thousand miles.

After dinner a visit was paid to Sultan, who received us most graciously, until I happened, as the night was cold and wet, to put on a Scotch shepherd's plaid. He grew uneasy, and began to shew signs of anger without any apparent cause ; it was some time before it was discovered that he objected to the plaid, and the moment I put it aside he was content. The only reason that could

be assigned for his dislike, was that he took the loose ends that hung down, for a bernous, it being a curious fact, that, from the first day he was brought into Medeah, a cub of a few weeks old, he has had the greatest aversion to the sight of an Arab or his bernous. Now, as it is impossible that he can have been ill-treated by one since he has belonged to General Marey, we must suppose, that for two years, he has remembered some ill-usage received in his cubhood at the hands of the Arabs who found him.

During the evening General Marey gave us an interesting account of the march of an expeditionary column under his command, with which he penetrated last year as far south as Laghouat, in latitude 34 degrees north, passing through a part of the Sahara Desert hitherto unvisited by Europeans. As I propose to devote a chapter to a short outline of this expedition, I will pass over the subject for the present.

Intending to set out early next morning, we took our leave of the General, with many thanks for the extreme kindness he had shewn us; a kindness that will not soon be forgotten either by my companions or

myself. Adjourning to Captain Martenot's room for a cup of tea, Captain Du Pin of the Etat-major, permitted us to look over his portfolio, containing sketches in the most masterly style, of African scenery, and the incidents of a soldier's life in Algeria; including also, a series of views, illustrating the country through which the expedition above mentioned marched.

It was now proposed that we should take a Moorish bath; and as there could be no doubt of the fact, that we wanted a good scrubbing after our journey, we went to the bath at ten o'clock. Passing through a narrow passage, we entered a room with two sides occupied by a sloping divan seven feet wide, and raised a couple of feet from the floor. Giving our watches, rings, and money to the owner of the bath, who sat at the doorway, we took off our clothes, replaced them with a voluminous wrapper of white cotton, and thrusting our toes into leather loops, tacked to a pair of wooden soles, shuffled along, led by an attendant, to a small apartment, full of steam and tolerably warm, adjoining the bath-room. Here we changed our drapery for dark cotton

handkerchiefs fastened round the waist like kilts, and passed on into a vaulted stone chamber, lit by a solitary lamp hanging from the roof, whose sickly light, struggling with the clouds of steam and the darkness, just rendered visible the strange forms of the bath attendants, naked, like ourselves, to the waist, with a single lock of dark hair, dripping with moisture, dangling from each uncovered shaven head.

The pavement was flooded with hot water, and at first the heat was so oppressive I could hardly breathe; but the feeling went off after having been seated a few minutes on a stone bench in the centre of the bath. We were now all laid out in a row on the pavement, each stretched on a blue cloth, with a rolled-up towel under the head, and an operator for each person. My attendant was a musical character, for when he commenced shampooing, he accompanied his labours with a song, marking the chorus at the end of each verse by a punch of extra force. Being well soaked and softened, I was now scrubbed with a camel's-hair glove until I felt as if I had no skin at all. I then had my legs and arms pulled, my head screwed

round with a jerk, was then doubled up like a boot-jack by his kneeling on my shoulders, my arms were brought behind me and while his knee was forced into the hollow of my back, two or three dexterous twists put in motion each rib and vertebra ; he then finished by endeavouring to crack, separately, every toe and finger. A large bowl of soap-suds was now brought, and, with a handful of the soft fibres of the aloe, he lathered me from head to foot ; a plentiful supply of hot water was now poured over me, and, reconducted into the interior, I was enveloped in clean white warm linen, a long soft towel was wrapped round my head as a turban ; and, lastly, taken into the outer-room, I was laid upon the divan, with three or four sheets over all.

To those who have not tried it, all this may not seem very delightful, but the feeling of lightness and elasticity given to a fatigued and stiffened body, by a Moorish bath cannot be imagined without being felt. One by one, as they came clean and polished from the hands of the operators, our party re-assembled, "all decked in virgin white." cool lemonade, hot coffee, and long pipes

were discussed as we lay half dozing in a state of delicious languor. It was too much trouble, at the time, to analyze my own feelings, but I remember the predominant idea was, that I felt exceedingly comfortable, without knowing why or wherefore, and I never felt less inclined to move than I did when, at midnight, it was necessary to rise and return to our hotel.

Next morning, March 22nd, the day commenced anything but favourably. Out of doors it was blowing a gale of wind and snowing hard, and in doors the storm raged with equal fury, the landlord and landlady insisting we should pay their unconscionable demands, and we holding out as stoutly for an abatement of charges most unreasonable; if the amount of the bill had been only half as much again as, or even double what we ought to have paid, we should not have grumbled. Of course it ended as these affairs always do—in our having to pay—and, I am sorry to add that, into the bargain, I lost the very last thing a traveller should lose, and that was—my temper. I must, however, in justice, take this opportunity of mentioning, that this was the only instance throughout

Algeria and Tunis where we met with even an attempt at extortion.

At ten o'clock we set out, and Captain Martenot, kind and attentive to the last, saw us off. To him we were indebted for making an interesting journey a most agreeable one, and we parted with a sincere wish to meet again.

As we were desirous of seeing both routes between Bleedah and Medeah, we had arranged to return over the Atlas, by the Col de Mouzaïa, celebrated not only for its great natural beauty, but as the scene of several desperate struggles between the French and Arabs. Two hours and a half, plunging up to our horses knees in mud and melting snow, brought us to a canteen, built a third of the way up the steep ascent of the Djebel Mouzaïa, and close to some copper mines now working, which I was anxious to visit. My companions, not being so much interested in mineralogy as myself, preferred going on at once to Bleedah, whilst I remained here for the rest of the day.

The superintendent of the mines kindly devoted the greater part of the afternoon to taking me over the works in progress.

At the period of the capture of Algiers it was well known to the French that certain districts of the Atlas, in the vicinity of Medeah, were rich in minerals, and that formerly copper had been worked successfully, although to no great extent, at the earlier period of the Turkish rule. The present mines were, however, discovered by the engineer officers, who, when surveying the country, found numerous fragments of ore in the beds of the mountain torrents, which led to further search, and thus to the discovery of the veins now working, as well as of the deserted galleries of the ancient mine. Specimens were sent to France to be analyzed; the ore was found to be rich, and a company was formed, who commenced their operations a year ago; but, owing to the difficulty of procuring labour, and the impediments incidental to a novel enterprise in this country, it is only for the last three months that the works have been properly carried on.

The galleries, twenty-two in number, are driven into the side of a ravine, with a south-westerly exposure. As yet none of them have attained any great length, the

longest being only 125 feet, and, being driven horizontally into the mountain, but little labour is requisite to extract the ore, which lies in a matrix of argil, the general direction of the veins being east and west. The ore is broken with hammers into small pieces, and sorted according to quality, all fragments containing a large proportion of earthy matter being rejected, as not of sufficient value to pay the expense of transport and smelting. The picked ore is then carried by mules and asses to Bleedah, from thence to Algiers, where it is shipped to France to be smelted. The ore is remarkably rich, some specimens possessing as much as 34 per cent. of copper, and the average yield of the ore imported into France is about 20 per cent. A hundred and sixty men are employed, a large proportion of whom are soldiers, permitted by the authorities to labour in the mines, and who receive their extra pay from the company.

Having visited these works, the superintendent now rode with me to the ancient mine, rather more than a mile distant, and on the other side of a steep ravine that separated two spurs of the mountain. It is held

by the same company, who have purchased from the tribes the exclusive right to all the minerals in an extensive district, for a small sum, and have also had the purchase confirmed to them by the French Government. A small colony of forty Germans now carry on the works, but hitherto the produce has not been equal to that of the other mines.

The account current throughout the country is, that it was worked by the Spaniards or English, and as a proof, they show a rude cross of a large size, hewn in the rock, near a spring in the neighbourhood, and two smaller ones cut in the mine itself. It is therefore probable that the miners were Christian slaves; which is further borne out by the appearance of the works, and the traces of blasting. The borings are remarkable for their size, being three inches nine-tenths in diameter.

The southern slope of the mountain seems to be one immense mass of minerals; antimony is abundantly disseminated with the copper; lead has been found in small quantities, and traces of silver discovered, but the ore that exists in the greatest abundance is iron, which, from the absence

of coal, is useless ; neither is there in this part of the Atlas sufficient wood to supply charcoal for a furnace at a reasonable cost.

The afternoon had now cleared up, and from the entrance of the old gallery I had a magnificent view : above me rose the snow-clad summit of the Djebel Mouzaïa, 5200 feet above the level of the sea ; at my feet lay the wild ravine ; and around, mountain beyond mountain stretched away into the distance, until their bold outlines becoming gradually less and less distinct, melted into the faint forms of the clouds floating lightly on the horizon.

Returning to the canteen—a wooden shed, with a rough exterior, but comfortable within—I was snugly seated by the fireside, when the snow began again to fall, and between eight and nine in the evening, the one room being cleared of customers, the tables were turned into beds, the fire replenished with wood, and honoured, as a stranger, with a pair of clean sheets, I slept soundly, between a half-drunken miner and a travelling pedlar, who occupied the tables to my right and left. The night was stormy, and by the morning the snow had

drifted round the canteen so deep, that a path had to be cut, before we could leave the house. As it still continued snowing, and the road was completely covered, I was obliged to wait until chance brought me a guide. Fortune kindly sent one in the guise of a French officer, who had come thus far from Medeah to meet his wife and child, whom he expected from Bleedah in the afternoon, but on seeing the state of the pass, left his horse, and set out on foot with me at eight o'clock. After an hour and a half of toilsome climbing up to the knees in snow, and every now and then wandering from the path, we reached the summit of the Col, where we overtook an old Arab, mounted on a wretched donkey, struggling, with the assistance of his two sons, through a snow-drift four feet deep, that had formed in a narrow pass between two rocks, on the crest of the mountain. After some delay, their filial efforts were crowned with success, and the old man and his ass were safe on the other side. With some difficulty I managed to drag my horse through, and we followed the Arabs, as guides, down the pass. Drawing nearer the plain, the snow was

succeeded by heavy rain, and on arriving at the banks of the Cheeffa we found we were just in time, as the flood from the rain and melting snow was coming down so rapidly, that in the course of an hour or two the river would be impassable, and the boat having been injured the previous week, was useless. Not knowing the ford, I was obliged to call in the assistance of two Arabs, who, each taking hold of my horse, which was very unwilling to face the stream, pulled him across in safety, and then returned for the French officer, who had by this time determined to go on to Bleedah. At half-past three I arrived at Bleedah, and rejoined my companions, wet to the skin, from the rain, and from wading the little mountain streams, having dragged my horse, which submitted very unwillingly to be led, for seven hours and a half, after me, in detestable weather, over an equally detestable mountain road. Next morning, the 24th of March, we left Bleedah at six o'clock, and, owing to the state of the roads after the rain, did not arrive at Algiers until noon, where we took possession of our old quarters in the Hotel de la Regence.

CHAPTER X.

A general view of the country between the 34th and 37th degrees of latitude—The climates—Trees—Truffles—Animals of the Desert—Winds from the sea—Season for military operations—Accumulations of sand: their effects on the rivers and springs—Divisions of the country south of the Atlas—Heights above the level of the sea—Salt lakes—The Sahara and its inhabitants—Aristocracy of the Desert—Arab tribes—The relations of the Sahara and the Tell—Distribution of domesticated animals—The Mehary—Its use in military operations—Population—The Arab of the Tell, and the Arab of the Sahara.

REMAINING for some days in Algiers, awaiting the departure of the Government steamer for Bôna, which sails every ten days, I take advantage of our halt, to give a general view of the country lying between the Mediterranean and the Great Sahara Desert, and an account of the French expedition to Laghouat in 1844, taken from a

clever and interesting pamphlet, drawn up by General Marey, and printed for private circulation.

The regions to the southward of Algiers, laying between the 34th and 37th degrees of latitude, possess six climates, perfectly distinct from each other. The plain of the Meteedjah, which is low, warm, and damp. The chain of the Atlas, twenty-five leagues in width, rising 11,000 feet above the level of the sea, and whose climate, extending as far as Boghar, resembles that of the South of France. The Little Desert—an elevated district, but scantily watered. The mountainous country of the Djebel Ammour, and the Djebel Sahary, from four to five thousand feet in height, and twenty-five leagues in width. Further south comes the northern part of the basin of the Mzi—a series of abrupt elevations, with an arid soil and a burning sky. And lastly, at Laghouat is the Great Desert, where you find neither mountains nor water.

From the sea-coast to within four leagues south of Boghar, grain is cultivated, without irrigation. After that, water must be artificially supplied, except in some elevated or

damp situations. It is probable that the system of irrigation introduced by the Arabs into Spain, is derived from the conquerors having employed there the same methods of cultivation that they had been forced by necessity to follow, in tilling the sandy soil of Africa.

In the Meteedjah grow the aloe, palm, cactus, and orange, which do not flourish in the Atlas, the trees of which are those of the south of France—such as evergreen oaks, elms, cork trees, pines, cypresses, &c. The trees of the Desert are the lentisci, the karouba, the juniper—which attains the height of thirty feet—and, in damp places, the tamarijk. In the chains of the Djebel Ammour and Djebel Sahary the trees are confined to the lentisci, cypresses, pines, and, in the higher parts of the mountains, the ilex. In the gardens about the *Ksars* the fruit trees of Europe and Africa are seen flourishing side by side. In the Meteedjah the palms are unproductive, and are not to be met with again until to the south of the Djebel Ammour, where they yield most abundantly, in a country where wheat and barley are scarce and dear, and the date is

the principal article of food. Here nature puts on a peculiar aspect ; the vegetable productions of the soil, the minerals, the birds, the reptiles, and the insects, all follow one type—the type of Central Africa.

In the Great and Little Deserts the higher parts consist of little else than rock, while in many of the less elevated portions a thick bed of vegetable earth, of an excellent quality, is found. In the months of May and June the Little Desert is covered with herbs, affording an abundant pasturage, superior to what is then found on the Djebel Ammour. In the Great Desert there is no grass, except in certain moist places. At the end of June the grass dries up, and the flocks then eat it as hay. In November fall the first rains, and verdure again returns.

Throughout the desert truffles are found in immense quantities, whitish in colour, and without any great flavour ; they are, nevertheless, a *recherché* and wholesome addition to the table, and are even an object of commerce, when preserved by drying.

The lion and the panther, which are tolerably common in the wooded mountains of the Atlas, are not to be found in either

the Great or Little Desert. On leaving Taguine the ostrich begins to appear, as well as a large species of antelope, called by the Arabs "louache." In the Great Desert the horned viper, a serpent of a very dangerous species, is numerous; and there are also lizards, nearly three feet long, with a flat, denticulated tail. The largest serpents are rarely more than seven feet and a half in length.

When the sea-breeze, having passed over the Meteedjah, reaches the Atlas, its temperature becomes reduced, and it deposits its humidity in the form of clouds, rain, or snow; then, carried on over the Little Desert, the clouds are dispersed by the increased heat of the soil, only to be again re-formed on the ranges of the Djebel Ammour, and finally disappear as they pass over the burning plains of the Sahara. Thus, often in the Little Desert the weather will be beautiful, while the Atlas and Djebel Ammour, to the north and south, are both enveloped in clouds, and when General Marey's expedition crossed the ridge of the Djebel Ammour in the midst of a violent storm, the sky was serene and clear, and the

weather lovely, in the deserts on either side of the mountains. As by these mountains a large portion of the moisture carried by the winds is intercepted, comparatively but a small share reaches the elevated plains beyond (except during the winter, when the rain falls in torrents), but being almost entirely dependent for water on what comes from the heavens, and that source being closed for the greater part of the year, the soil is burnt up, vegetation cannot exist, and these plains become a desert. In the Atlas and the Djebel Ammour snow falls every winter, and lies on the ground for several weeks. It has been seen on the Djebel Sahary in the month of May. But little snow falls in the Meteedjah or the deserts, and, when it does, it melts almost immediately.

The best seasons for carrying on military operations in the south are the winter and spring, because then the heats have not commenced, and there is also a supply of grass and water. But it must be taken into consideration that the Great Desert is at times subject to sudden inundations, which are very destructive in a country so flat and so extensive, that an army might be

destroyed by them. A few days before the French expeditionary column arrived at Laghouat, several Arab douars had been swept away in this manner.

Throughout the desert the sand is of the same nature, resembling a reddish yellow sand-stone reduced to powder. The beds of sand commence near Taguine ; they become larger at the Ksars, Djebel Sahary, and Djebel Ammour, and beyond they are still more extensive. On elevated places, or on the face of steep acclivities, there is little sand ; but in the low grounds, in the ravines, in the beds of rivers, and against obstacles that have a southerly exposure, it accumulates rapidly. Near Laghouat some precipitous mountains are situated, against whose southern sides are piled immense sand-banks, whilst on the others there are none. These sands are most probably not the debris of the soil in the immediate neighbourhood, but have been gradually deposited here by the sand-laden winds of ages.

This reddish, yellow sand, which covers the whole country, imparts its own peculiar tint to the landscape, and even to the sky,

near the horizon, when it is blowing hard from the interior. It penetrates everywhere, and is the cause of many diseases of the eye ; but the most serious consequences ensue from its collecting in the hollows and in the beds of rivers, where not only what is blown into them remains, but much of what lay on the higher ground during the summer is carried, by the winter's rain, into the water-courses. The streams continue to flow as long as they are able to carry away the sand, which they can only do where the river runs over a hard rocky bed, with but a thin covering of loose soil, for, when the stream arrives at a deep mass of sand, which it has assisted to form, it disappears. Then if, when lower down, the bed of the river rises nearer the surface by reason of the layer of sand becoming thinner, the river re-appears. Thus, the springs of Aoueta and of Assafia do not pass the limits of the gardens, at those places, more than 150 yards, when they lose themselves in the sand. The Oued Mzi, above Tejmout, is a beautiful stream, with a copious supply of good water, which spreads itself over an extensive bed of sand ; after flowing a short

distance, the river disappears, returns to the surface at Recheg, vanishes again to reappear above Laghouat, and then finally disappears for ever. On this account, at Ksir and Aïrane water is only to be procured from wells dug to the depth of twelve or fourteen feet. The course of the river underground is marked at times by the fall of the water during the inundations, and by the dampness of the soil, which gives birth to trees and herbs. The quicksands of the Oued Mzi are very dangerous ; horsemen, who, through ignorance of the localities, attempt to cross at any but the safe spot, being frequently swallowed up. When the Oued Mzi overflows, it leaves, on retiring, a rich slime, which renders fertile for a time the banks of the stream : last year (1844) the river had risen three times, and the additional strength of the herbage, from this cause, contributed greatly to the good condition of the horses during the expedition to Laghouat.

The country to the south of the Atlas may be viewed generally, as consisting of six large basins. 1st, That of the Cheleeff, bounded on the north by the Atlas, on the

west by the elevated plateaux that extend from Tiaret to the Djebel Ammour ; on the south by the Djebel Ammour and the chain of Meksem, and to the east by the line of separation of the water between Meksem and the Atlas. This district, fifty leagues in length, and as many in breadth, is drained by the Cheleeff, which finds an outlet at Boghar. 2nd, That to the west of Tiaret, where the Meena, and the other rivers traversing the Tell of Oran, take their rise. 3rd, To the north of that ridge, and to the west of a line from Tiaret to the Djebel Ammour is the basin of the Chotts (the salt lakes) of the desert of Oran. 4th, To the east of the line of the Meksem, to the north of the Djebel Sahary, and to the south of the Atlas, another basin is formed, whose waters fall into the salt lake of Bousâda. 5th, Between the Meksem and the Djebel Sahary, is the salt lake of Zarhz, in the territory of the Ouled Nail tribe; and, 6th, to the south of the Djebel Ammour and the Djebel Sahary is the basin of the Oued Mzi, whose waters run into a salt lake in the regency of Tunis.

The plateaux to the east of the Little

Desert, are of a considerable elevation, and slope gradually, without an abrupt declivity, towards Boghar. The high plateaux to the south and to the west of the Great Desert, are of the same elevation, and descend with a gentle slope as far as the Oued Mzi, and with that river to Biscara, and thence to the salt lake Melguig.

The heights above the level of the sea, may, in round numbers, be estimated as follow :

The plain of the Meteedjah	500 feet.
Lower part of the Little Desert.	2000 „
Higher plateaux of ditto	2600 „
In the Great Desert, the lower part near the river Mzi, where it falls into the lake Melguig, is the same level as the sea.	
Near Laghouat	2000 „
More elevated plateaux in the Great Desert . .	2800 „
The lake of Zarhz	2300 „

In the Little Desert are several detached groups of hills, but the Great Desert, as far as it has been visited in this direction is perfectly flat, and the Arabs state, that for many days' march to the south, slightly undulating plains only are to be found. From the summits of the Djebel Ammour and the mountains near Laghouat, nothing is to be

seen towards the south but an unbroken horizon, as from a vessel at sea.

It must be admitted that a general change has taken place in Northern and Central Africa; the basins are formed by the undulations of the ground, and the marine shells that are found, prove that the sea once covered this portion of the earth. Where the basins opened towards the present coast, the waters entered the sea; but, in the basins enclosed on every side, evaporation would take place, and the water would be by degrees concentrated in the lower part, where the salt it contained would be deposited. The rain-water collects in the low ground, and from thence feeds the lakes, which, full in winter, are generally almost dry during the summer. It is to be remarked, that in all these inland lakes the water is very strongly impregnated with salt, which may be accounted for thus: taking the basin of Zarhz alone, it has been computed that the sea-water it contained, held in solution salt that, if precipitated in a solid mass, would cover a base twenty-five leagues square, with a bed of salt 650 feet thick. A mountain, one immense mass of sea-salt, which is near the

lake of Zarhz, is a square league at the base, and upwards of 600 feet in height, and is probably the result of a displacement posterior to the evaporation of the sea-water, and the deposit of the salt in the lower part of the basin.

The more elevated portions of the desert are little more than naked rocks, deprived, by the heavy rains of winter, of their earth ; thus not only is the sand collected in the lower situations, but the vegetable earth also. In these places the surface of the soil remains dry, the streams run under ground, and to procure water, which is often of a bad quality, it is necessary to reach the solid bed of the basin.

The Sahara is far from implying, like our word desert, an uninhabitable region : for, as in all other countries, there are different descriptions of land, varying from good to very bad ; for instance, in the Alps, there are elevated portions where corn does not grow, and which are used only for grazing : in the eyes of the Arabs these would be the Sahara. The soil of the Little Desert, if in Europe, would be well cultivated ; and even in the Great Desert, the lower parts support

a numerous population. Where there are no springs, it is sufficient if water can be procured from wells, for fertility is the result of irrigation ; the gardens produce an abundant supply of fruits and vegetables, and the palm is cultivated on a grand scale. Owing to the shallow covering of earth, the herbage on the higher plains is weak and scanty, which obliges the tribes who live too far to the south to enable them to remove in the summer to the Tell, to lay up during the spring a supply of hay for the summer. In the Sahara, provision must be made for the unproductive season, the summer, in the same manner that, in the north, we guard against the scarcity of the winter.

One of the characteristic features of the desert is the absence of beaten tracks ; so that it is only by the outline of the country, or by observations of the stars, that the desired route can be followed. The Arabs are accustomed to travel immense distances to arrange trifling affairs. Single travellers generally make their journeys during the night, both to escape robbers, and to avoid the taxes that many chiefs lay upon those who pass through their territory. The douars

are usually placed in retired spots, for safety, and also to reduce the expense of exercising hospitality, which in many places is very great; during the day they are to be discovered by the rising smoke, and at night the fires may be seen by mounting the hillocks. Almost all the tribes are robbers when occasion offers; and when thus employed, the Arabs are distinguished for their intelligence, daring, and powers of abstinence, especially with regard to enduring thirst, as, among themselves it is considered disgraceful to drink much, and it is a subject of pride to be able to pass several days without water. They are excessively fond of the chase; and, besides greyhounds, they have admirably trained hawks. As guides they are incomparable, finding the douars they wish to reach, with facility, and tracking the enemy, or robbers, with precision, by means of a thousand trifling indications which would escape the unpractised eye of a European.

In the Tell, the tribes, although dwelling in tents, have but little to fear from sudden attacks, as it is difficult for a party to pass through unperceived; in the Little Desert

the uncertainty of the relations between the tribes commences, and in the Great Desert it is at its height. The immense expanse of the Sahara gives rise to a constant anticipation of danger, which is often changed into reality ; hence arises the necessity of obtaining early intelligence of passing events, and news travel through the desert with extraordinary rapidity. In the event of crimes being committed, neighbouring tribes often join and mutually assist each other in pursuing the delinquents ; without some arrangement of this kind, there would be nothing but murders and robberies, which, even as it is, are very numerous.

Each Arab reckons on his douar, his tribe, its chiefs, and its allies for protection ; on this account it is desirable that the chiefs should be able men, possessed of power, and of ancient and noble families, whose alliances give additional strength. The aristocracy of the desert are thus held in higher esteem, and are more honoured than the noblest families in the Tell, where the protection of the chiefs is considered, from the district lying so near the seat of government, as but of little value.

The tribes of the Little Desert cultivate the soil near the borders of the Tell, and on the banks of rivers; and also breed large flocks and herds, which find on their territories, in the spring, an ample supply of grass, which in the winter also is tolerably abundant, and during the summer and autumn sufficient. In the summer they assemble near the rivers or springs that never fail, such as "the Fountain of Taguine," which signifies "the fountain of the powerful," and owes its name to the great scarcity of water in its environs, which renders the possession of this spot an object of contention among the tribes; so that it is "the powerful" alone who can retain it. The tribes of the Tell pass the winter in the Little Desert, to avoid the piercing cold of the mountains, and to husband their own pasturage. In the ranges of the Djebel Ammour and Djebel Sahary, the inhabitants and their cattle are able to pass the summer in some of the more watered parts of their mountains. As for the Great Desert, cultivation being only practicable in the oases, they feed their flocks of sheep and camels on the thin pastures of the Sahara. During the winter and spring the animals

remain several months without drinking, the grass at those seasons containing sufficient moisture ; the men and horses drink sheep and camels' milk, or water brought from a distance upon the backs of the latter animals. The Saharian tribes are those who carry on the trade of the interior, and whose wanderings have been described in a previous chapter.

No life can be more adventurous than that of these Arabs. For instance, the Larbas, who, torn by intestine feuds, are divided into factions, and regularly every year are at war with each other, have to traverse by force the territories of their enemies ; to defend themselves against the pirates of the desert, the robber tribes ; they unite with their allies against mutual enemies, and, when opportunity offers, they attack and plunder those weaker than themselves. They must at all times be well acquainted with the political and commercial condition of their own and the surrounding countries, for their safety depends upon one, and their profits upon the other.

The month of June is often a season when attacks are made upon the Arabs of the

Tell by these tribes ; for in the cultivated spots of the Sahara, the Ksars, &c., the harvest, such as it is, is over by the end of May, and trade not leading them northwards until the end of July, leaves the interval unoccupied. In these attacks the object is the crops, which, though on the ground, are just ripe ; and the tribes, either preparing for, or working at their harvest, being all employed on their own affairs, there is but little to fear from those tribes they leave unmolested ; they must, however, always reckon upon being able to pass the remainder of the summer in some other part of the Tell ; this is the usual practice of the tribes who live to the south-west of Oran, and who, purchasing their grain, and trading with Morocco, are indifferent as to what relations they bear towards the Arabs of the Tell.

From the Mediterranean to the centre of the Sahara, the domesticated animals are distributed according to the nature of the soil and climate. The Kabyles, living in houses in the mountains, possess large flocks of goats and sheep, and a few horned cattle, mules, asses, not many horses, and no camels. The nomade Arabs of the Tell, who never

wander far from their silos, have plenty of cattle, horses, mules, and a few camels. The tribes of the Little Desert, who never quit the rich pastures comprised between the Atlas and the Djebel Ammour, scarcely ever going further from the centre of their territories than fifteen or twenty leagues, have great numbers of sheep, camels, horses, and a few mules. Oxen are only to be found in the Atlas, in the Djebel Ammour, and some other mountain chains, and never beyond the Mzi. In the north of the Great Desert are sheep, camels, horses, but no mules. The tribes in the south, from the great scarcity of water and herbage, have few sheep, but possess immense flocks of camels; and the horse is replaced by the "mehary." The mehary is not in itself a distinct species, but stands in the same relation towards the ordinary camel, that a thoroughbred racer does to a cart-horse. The hump is without fat, and very small, and the whole shape of the mehary exhibits an appearance of strength and spirit. Its habitual pace is a trot, which it is able to sustain for the whole day at about the same speed as the ordinary trot of a horse; but

over rough or slippery ground the rate of speed is much reduced. The saddle is placed upon the withers, in front of the hump, and the legs of the rider, when mounted, rest upon the animal's neck; when razzias are made, two men are mounted on each. Their food consists of certain herbs, and the kernels of dates; and the Arabs allege that the meharies can travel fifty, and even eighty leagues in twenty-four hours.

The horses of the Sahara often drink milk; very few ever get barley; they are sometimes fed upon dates, and in cases where there is no other food, cooked meat has been given to them. Those that are kept exclusively upon dates and milk are in capital working condition, and will bear immense fatigue. The breed of the Oulad Sidi Chikh, south-west from the Djebel Ammour, is the finest in the desert.

The military expeditions, or razzias, are made by the inhabitants of the Ksars, with infantry; by the northern tribes of the desert, with horsemen; and by those to the south, with their force mounted on meharies. From fifteen to twenty leagues is considered as a day's march for the former, from thirty

to forty-five for the cavalry, and from fifty to eighty for the latter; so that a six days' expedition, going and returning, would be fifty leagues for the infantry, a hundred for the cavalry, and a hundred and eighty for the meharies. There is one disadvantage attending the use of the meharies, which is, that as they cannot increase their pace they are soon overtaken by horsemen, even with a start of seven or eight leagues in their favour.

From the sea to the river Mzi the country would support a large population; and that it has once done so, is proved by the numerous ruins which are found as far south as the river Heumar; in the Djebel Sahary and the Djebel Ammour there are at the present day more villages than in that part of the Atlas inhabited by the Arabs.

Finally, the Tell is looked upon by the Arabs of the desert not only as the source from which they derive their foreign luxuries, and as the outlet for their superfluous produce, but as a place of safety and refuge in the event of a dry, unfruitful season. In the eyes of the Bedoueen the Tell is the land of wealth and security, where life passes

easily and all the delights of the city are enjoyed, but where the inhabitants have greatly degenerated. He looks upon the Arab of the Tell as too nearly resembling the dwellers in towns and the Kabiles, whom he holds in the most sovereign contempt, and considers that the free, noble, and honourable life is that of the desert, where wealth, and life itself, depends upon a chance, and each prospers according to his talents, good fortune, and bravery.

CHAPTER XI.

General Marey's expedition to Laghouat—Arrives at the Oued-el-Heumar—The advance of the French foretold by a Marabout 130 years ago—Extracts from the prophecies—Return of the expedition.

THE following narrative of the expedition to Laghouat is abridged from that written by General Marey himself:—

“During the months of March and April, 1844, an expeditionary column, 1500 men strong had traversed the Little Desert, and penetrated into the Djebel Sahary as far as the Ksar Zackar; it was then one hundred and two leagues to the south of Algiers, twenty-five from Laghouat, and fifteen from the Great Desert. It acted directly upon the Ouled Nail, and indirectly upon the country of Laghouat. The Ouled Nail submitted, and a satisfactory relation had been established with them as tributaries to our

Government. The Larbas Cheragas, who had come from Tittery into the Tell in 1843, sent their three Kaïds, who brought their tribute-horses, and received anew their ber-nous of investiture. Laghouat and the confederation of the Ksars sent a deputation, which also brought their tribute-horses, and whose chief, Yaya-Ben-Salem, a man of consequence, brother to the chief of Laghouat, made a very important proposal—namely, that Ahmed-Ben-Salem should be made Kalifa, and that he should govern Laghouat, the five neighbouring Ksars—the Larbas, the Aradhlias, and even the Beni Mezab, in the name of France. This project appearing to me highly interesting, and worthy of being put into execution, I sent Yaya to Algiers with my report. The Governor-General approving of the proposal, it was necessary to visit these places in order to organize this completely new country, and, if necessary, to force it into submission. This was the aim of our expedition.

“ On the 12th of April I received orders to prepare the column, and having to march ninety-six leagues beyond Medeah, forty days’ provisions were requisite. Between

Boghar and Taguine we were on our own territory, and it was necessary to establish at the latter point a fortified dépôt, not only to secure our communications, but in order to lessen our encumbrances and the expenses of our convoy, by leaving there our invalids, and the provisions for the use of the column on its return. The troops arrived at Medeah, from Bleedah and Bouffarick, on the 24th of April. Mules were taken up to carry the provisions from Medeah to Boghar, from whence they were to be conveyed by camels, and the cavalry of the tribes were ordered to join us between Boghar and Taguine. I took only 140 spahis and 400 Arab horsemen, partly to lessen the convoy, which, nevertheless, was very large, and proved a great impediment, and partly because we wished to act, not so much on the tribes, as on the Ksars.

"The Ksars are placed at the extreme edge of the Great Desert, and are, in fact, its ports, being dépôts in which the tribes deposit their merchandise, as they could neither easily nor safely carry it with them from place to place. Each tribe has its own. Some are placed under the protection of Marabouts, as Aïn Madhi, Cheref, Sidi

Bousid, &c.; others are defended by the tribes themselves; and lastly, others, like Laghouat, are governed by chiefs of their own. The Ksars and the tribes are thus equally necessary to each other, and both are likewise, to a certain degree, dependant upon the chiefs of the Tell, without whose permission they could neither carry on commerce, nor procure their supplies of grain. Hence the proverb of the desert, ‘He is our father who is the master of our mother, and our mother is the Tell.’ The necessary requisites for the establishment of a Ksar, are as follows:—An elevated situation, not only strong as a military position, but safe from inundations; to be near a spring, or an inexhaustible river, or otherwise to possess pits of drinkable water, which must also afford a supply for irrigating the fields and gardens; an enclosure, strong enough to resist all probable attacks; and a soil sufficiently compact to allow of silos being easily excavated.

“The buildings are usually of coarse bricks, baked in the sun; some few have the lower parts of the walls of masonry. The enceinte has usually flanking projections, and the

gardens are surrounded by walls, with battlemented towers. The vegetation is superb ; the palm trees grow from sixty to a hundred feet in height, the pear and almond trees resemble our large oaks. The vegetables are excellent ; and millet is much cultivated. The harvest is about the end of May.

“ Our preparations were considerably impeded by the constant and heavy rain, which continued to fall until we reached Laghouat ; but there was this difference—we were much harassed by it, as far as the Narhouassel, two marches beyond Boghar ; but from thence it was most useful, as it preserved the grass and produced cool—indeed, at times, excessively cold weather, instead of oppressive heat. I had received directions to provide the column with mules, but on computing the allowance of barley for each mule at the rate of only three kilogrammes per diem, I found that, for a march of forty days, each mule would only be able to carry his own rations ; I therefore proposed, and obtained leave, to use camels in their place. As the expedition was to act in the desert, it was obvious that the camel—the natural beast of burden of the districts through which we

were to pass—was preferable for many reasons, two of which were, that their price is only the fourth part of that of mules, and that any number could be procured with facility, while mules are becoming scarce. I had 277 camels, the property of Government; and the requisite number was made up by the tribes furnishing them, on my requisition, at the daily rate of three francs and a half for each camel.

“ On the 1st of May, the Cheleeff being fordable, the troops, which had been ready on the 27th of April, left Medeah. They had scarcely crossed the river, when, on the 3rd, a furious tempest burst forth: a large proportion of our provisions being damaged, was obliged to be replaced, and I had 20,000 rations of rice-bread brought in haste from Medeah. At length, on the 10th, the last camels having crossed the Cheleeff, we started, and reached Taguine on the 14th. There we found the remains of a Ksar, which had been built above the marshes thirty years ago; but the situation having been found unhealthy, it had been abandoned. Two days were employed in placing this Ksar in a state of defence; four bastions were thrown

up, and a double line of entrenchments—the outer one being formed of dry stones, and that within of cases of biscuit and sacks of barley. I left there an ample supply of wood cut three leagues from the spot, 150 leatheren bottles full of water; ammunition, and an hospital wagon, with 150 men, under the command of Captain Motet, of the Engineers. The tribes of the Rahman, the Ouled Chaïb, and the Bou Aïch, placed their numerous douars in the neighbourhood; the sick horses and mules were left in charge of the Bou Aïch; 257 useless camels were disbanded, as, after leaving Taguine, the only camels that could be returned to their owners were those of the Ouled Nail, who accompanied us on our march southward.

" We left Taguine on the 17th, when our column consisted of 2800 men, and 1700 animals—namely, 1700 infantry soldiers, 140 regular cavalry, two mountain guns with eighty rounds for each, thirty artillery-men with wall pieces, the train, &c.;—in all, 2100 regular soldiers, 400 horsemen of the Goum, 300 Arabs attached to the different services, together with 1400 beasts of burden. Each man was furnished with

sixty rounds of ammunition, and carried his rations for six days ; we also had with us, on the camels, 7½,000 musket cartridges, and provisions for twenty-one days.

“ From the 18th to the 21st—on which day we arrived at Tejmout—we were in the range of the Djebel Ammour. At Tejmout I found the Kalifa and the principal chiefs assembled. Tedjini, the chief of Aïn Madhi, did not come, but he sent several of the principal people, a horse, and a submissive letter. Tejmout is a well-situated Ksar, with beautiful gardens ; it was formed by emigrants from Laghouat, who had been driven from thence by civil wars ; but most of the houses were destroyed or injured by the war two years ago, and it will require a long period of tranquillity to restore them to their former state. Its force consists of 120 muskets, and everything else in proportion.

“ On the 22d, during our halt, I sent Lieut.-Colonel St. Arnaud with twelve officers, some Chasseurs, 200 horsemen of the Goum, the Kalifa, and the Larbas, to Aïn Madhi, to examine and take a plan of the town, and so to confirm, by an ostensible act, the sub-

mission of Tedjini. The party was well received, examined everything most minutely, and returned the same day. Lieut.-Colonel St. Arnaud acted and spoke in Aïn Madhi as master, and conducted this delicate and important mission with much tact. There was, however, at one moment great alarm in the town, for, after they had admitted the twelve officers, and an equal number of Chasseurs and horsemen, the Lieut.-Colonel sent off a dispatch to me, stating the submissive reception he had met with ; and it appears that, seeing the courier depart, the inhabitants suspected treachery. The chiefs, however, did not share their suspicions. It is certain that, if the officers and Chasseurs already within the town had wished to admit the Arab horsemen stationed on the outside, not the slightest resistance could have been made. In fact, Tedjini had at that moment placed himself completely in our power, under the guarantee of our honour only, and this treason, which must have succeeded, would have been quite according to Arab warfare, but was far from our thoughts. Had it been necessary to act against Tedjini, we should have attacked the place at once ;

and I make no doubt, from the excellence of our troops, that we should have succeeded, although, probably, with considerable loss.

“ The Kalifa being at Aïn Madhi, imposed a tax of 2,000 boudjoux, (3720 francs) which he ordered to be paid the next day. Aïn Madhi is a very ancient town ; it is built on a hillock, at the foot of which flows an inexhaustible brook, which irrigates the gardens ; it belongs entirely to the family of Tedjini, who do not allow any strangers to establish themselves there ; they have made it habitually the seat of their religious worship, and for the last forty years have held it as a very strong military post.

“ In Africa there are many religious orders resembling those which existed in France prior to the Revolution, but differing from them in certain respects : the proselytes, instead of being assembled in monasteries, are scattered over the country. They are subjected to certain practices of devotion ; they sometimes make donations to their order, and they bring a certain portion of their revenue annually to their chief, relying upon his support and advice for their good in this world, and upon his protection

in the next. Almost every tribe in the desert and Tell has its own marabout, whom they call their Lord, whose servants they consider themselves, and whose hand is respectfully kissed by the most elevated chiefs. The order of the Tedjini extends very far into Algeria, Tunis, Morocco, and the interior of Africa. In almost all the towns of the locality Tedjini has, or had before 1830, schools, where his disciples were instructed, in order that they might represent him and his doctrines. The authority for the management of the order is transmitted from father to son, or, failing a son, through the collateral branches, as in reigning families. In many of the religious orders which exist in the Tell this is the case also, but the Government sanctions the nomination of the new chief, whilst at Aïn Madhi the chief of the order generally dispenses with this formality.

“ Tedjini possesses great power and influence, as many of the tribes follow the rule of his order ; he is also very wealthy, and his adherents being devoted to him, make him large annual presents. His family also is of a very high religious nobility, standing

among the seven or eight most holy and most considerable families of marabouts in the north of Africa. In addition to this, his numerous followers are perpetually increasing his influence, and his town contains a large military force when compared with the means of attack of the surrounding country. Formerly Aïn Madhi was only defended by walls made of bricks baked in the sun, like the neighbouring little Ksars ; but in the year 1790, Tedjini, the father of the present chief of the order, brought an architect from Tunis, who, at a great expense, built good brick-and-mortar walls, with battlements, &c., forty feet high, and six and a half thick. These walls having been destroyed during the war with Abd-el-Kader, Tedjini is now occupied in rebuilding them ; they have been in progress for the last four years, and will probably be finished this year, or the next, at latest. The family of Tedjini paid a small annual tax to the Turkish Government, but considered itself as belonging actually to the empire of Morocco.

“ On the 23d we marched to Aouéta, a small town, possessing not more than fifty

muskets ; like the others, it has suffered much in the civil wars. It is built upon a height commanding a ravine, through which runs a spring, which irrigates the gardens, and is then lost almost immediately in the sand : it is annexed to Laghouat, and is its advanced post to the west. Being seven leagues to the south-west of Tejmout, and six to the south of Aïn Madhi, its situation would have enabled me to act against the latter town, had it been necessary, as well as to keep in order the Ksar Tégérouna, and the Ouled Yacoub, who are sometimes refractory.

“ Whilst I was at Aouéta, Tedjini sent to me the amount of his tax in articles of clothing. These I returned untouched ; and he then wrote to me in grateful and submissive terms, sending, at the same time, six quintals of dates, which reached me at Laghouat, and were transferred to the Goum. Aouéta paid its contribution. The Ouled Yacoub fled six days’ march to the west. Tégérouna, to whose inhabitants I had not written, owing to its not belonging to the circle of the Kalifa, sent a tribute-horse ;

but the deputation not arriving at Aouéta till after our departure from thence, returned home again.

"The treatment of Tedjini had required much consideration, owing to the following circumstances. He has always shewn a disinclination to exertion, appearing only to wish to enjoy in peace and safety the advantages of his private position, as a rich, pious, and much venerated chief. He is very useful to the country, as, from his known probity, and the strength of his town, the dépôts committed to his care are considered perfectly safe; he also uses his influence in preventing wars between the tribes, he receives all travellers in a most hospitable manner, and has even established an hospital for the sick. To be well thought of in the country, it was necessary to treat Tedjini with respect, for his opinions are adopted by the people in general, who confide in his judgment and sanctity, and who have frequently sacrificed themselves for him, and other members of his family. As Tedjini gave out, that the ill-treatment he received from Abd-el-Kader was on our

account, it was politic to demonstrate that he, the enemy of that Emir, was the subject and the friend of the Christians.

“ Tedjini has one peculiarity; he has never consented to receive any strange chief; he has never presented himself before a Bey, nor before Abd-el-Kader. In Morocco he never appeared before the emperor or his superior agents, nor before the sovereigns of Tunis, Tripoli, or Egypt, in his way to Mecca. The general opinion was, that we were coming to take possession of Aïn Madhi, and Tedjini was much alarmed; he was evidently disposed to fly, for he had made no preparations to defend himself, having with him only the eighty armed men belonging to the town. He well knew that he had only been able to resist Abd-el-Kader, through the support afforded him by Ahmet ben Salem, and therefore showed himself quite submissive to the Kalifa and to us. In this dilemma several plans presented themselves. If we marched on Aïn Madhi, the probability was, that Tedjini would fly, which would have a very bad effect; if, instead of flying, he had closed his gates, either an assault or a system of

intimidation would have become necessary ; these might have failed, which would have discouraged our column at the very outset, and, even in the case of military success, our political situation in the country would have been seriously injured ; on the other hand, to rest contented with the submission of Tedjini, as manifested only by his letter, his tribute horse, and the words of his envoys, without obtaining a more decided proof of it, both in the eyes of the French and the natives, and above all, without ascertaining the strength of Aïn Madhi, seemed a very incomplete result. There was a middle course, which appeared the most advisable ; this was instead of going straight with the column on Aïn Madhi and insisting on Tedjini's appearing before me, to send officers to reconnoitre the place, and to demonstrate our authority before the native chiefs, to fix a tax to be paid immediately, and to proceed to Aöueta, which is not far from Aïn Madhi. If the orders given to Tedjini, with this view, were executed with a good grace, then to treat him well and free him from all fear of our approach ; if not, to march on Aïn Madhi,

having a perfect knowledge of the localities. This plan, which was highly approved of by the Kalifa, succeeded completely, as I have already narrated, and it became clear to all, that, on the one hand, Tedjini was not only submissive and obedient, but even grateful and devoted to the French authority; but, on the other hand, that we were his masters, able to injure him more than Abd-el-Kader, but testifying towards him nothing but great consideration and good-will. Thus both the French and the native interests were satisfied.

"On the 24th we bivouacked at Recheg, upon the river Mzi, which flows past Tejmout and Laghouat; we arrived before this last-named Ksar on the 25th, and halted there during the next two days. Laghouat, where we were very well received, is an ancient town belonging formerly to Morocco, but, after passing under several rulers, was, at the time of our conquest, under the protection of the Algerine government, to which it paid a very small tax. It is considered the capital of the desert, and is built on the north and west sides of a mountain, to the east of which runs the river Mzi. The for-

tifications, consisting of two strong towers, built on the culminating points of the crest of the mountains, are united by the walls. The town is divided into eighteen districts ; each district takes the water for one day, subdividing it among the different families ; the taxes are imposed according to the quantity of water taken by each. There are no baths in the Ksar, which contains only four meanly built mosques and one fondouk.

"A small stream, bringing water from the Mzi, irrigates the magnificent gardens, which form to the north and south of the town splendid forests, many thousand metres in length. The palms are large, and in great numbers ; they produce excellent dates, date honey, and palm wine ; the fibres of the leaves furnish materials for various kinds of matting, and for the large umbrella-shaped hats worn in the desert ; and the wood is used for building. The fig, peach, plum, apricot, vine, almond, mulberry, and banana grow there in abundance, together with many kinds of vegetables. Although these gardens form the principal riches of La-ghouat, they are at the same time her weak

points; as the inhabitants would never be able to make up their minds to see them destroyed, and the impossibility of defending them against such a column as ours, may account for the favourable reception we met with. I was accompanied, when I entered the town, by the standard and music belonging to the Kalifa, and from five to six hundred foot soldiers came out to meet us, discharging muskets in our honour. The principal inhabitants of the town presented themselves before me, and daily sent dates, and forty dishes of couscoosoo, which were made over to the Goum. We established a market, as we had done at Tejmout, and installed, during the day, a police guard in the town, where numbers of our officers and soldiers repaired by turns in small parties, by special permission, making purchases of provisions, the manufactures of the desert, ostrich feathers, &c. The arrangements for the future payment of an annual tribute were made without difficulty. The population of Laghouat is estimated at from 5000 to 6000, and its force consists of from 500 to 600 infantry, and about ten horsemen.

"The 28th we halted at the Ksar Assafia,

bivouacking at Reg, near the Ksar Ksir-el-Aïrane, six leagues to the south-east of Laghouat; and on the 29th, we halted at Ksir-el-Aïrane itself; at both these towns we were well received. Assafia is a very ancient Ksar ; it was formerly considerable, and has long made war against Laghouat. About a hundred years ago, so runs the local tradition, the people of Laghouat promised a heavy sum to the marabout El-Hadji-Aïssa, if he would obtain from heaven the destruction of Assafia ; he consented, and shortly afterwards an extraordinary hail-storm completely destroyed the town, it being, like its neighbours, built merely of earthen bricks dried in the sun. The people of Laghouat having obtained their aim, refused the stipulated payment to El-Hadji-Aïssa, who then predicted to them, as a curse, that they should themselves be perpetually torn in pieces by intestine divisions. The Assafians went to entreat the marabout's protection, and he advised them to rebuild their town in a higher situation, which they did. One half of this new town was completely destroyed during the war, two years ago, and the other half was much

injured, so that we first arrive at a small Ksar, then at the ruins of one nearly the same size, and finally we find the remains of the original Ksar, which was much more extensive, surrounded by beautiful, large, well watered gardens and corn fields. The spring as usual is speedily lost in the sand.

"Ksir-al-Airane was built forty years ago, by order of Ahmet Ben-Salem. A part of the Rahman tribe, who reside near the Tell, separating themselves from the rest of the Neja, in consequence of one of those disagreements so common among the nomadic tribes, formed the base of the population, under chiefs from Laghouat. There are no fountains, merely pits of very indifferent water; which, however, is only used during the droughts, as at other times water is procured from the pools of the river Mzi, which, after leaving this place, is called Djeddi. The object in establishing this Ksar, was to have an advanced post to the east, in order to control those tribes who are frequently obliged to encamp near the pools, and also to furnish them with magazines at a high rent. This Ksar is still extensive; although nearly a third of the buildings were destroyed in

the war of last year, they can arm about 150 men ; the houses have large courts full of silos, but the gardens are inconsiderable, owing to the want of running water.

“ In this march from Taguine, we had continued along the edge of the territory of the Ouled Nail, and the Kalifa took advantage of the effect produced by our column, to collect the taxes from this tribe ; we were then two days’ march from the Ksars Messad and Demmed, neither of which I had visited, and one from Boudrine. Here were beautiful fields of corn, sown by a part of the Yaya-Ben-Salem tribe, who, always living in the Great Desert, have never submitted either to the Turks or Abd-el-Kader.

“ On the 30th we reached Boudrine ; here the Ksars Messad and Demmed sent their tribute horses, while the chief of the Larbas, and the agha of the Ouled Nail answered for the ultimate submission of the tribe to which the corn belonged, they being still encamped near Laghouat ; and they also guaranteed an additional payment of 1000 boudjoux, as a tribute upon the corn-fields, they having, of course, been left uninjured.

“ Reconnoitring the country for about a league and a half to the south of Boudrine, we saw at two leagues’ distance, the confluence of the two rivers, the El-Heumar and the Djeddi; the Djeddi is the continuation of the Mzi, it runs underground, and can only be traced by the growth of a few trees. The El-Heumar rises in the west, and, during the rains, is an impetuous torrent, carrying all before it, but dries up rapidly. There is a spring near the place where the El-Heumar falls into the Djeddi, and near it, on a height, I could plainly distinguish the ruins of a large town, which appears to have been of Roman origin; and the Arab chiefs told me, that some inscriptions in our style of writing are still to be found there.

“ El-Hadji-Aïssa, a marabout of Laghouat, predicted, 130 years ago, that the French would take Algiers, come to Laghouat, and penetrate as far as the river El-Heumar. Our arrival in the country, and march as far as Boudrine having been foretold, has added much to the already great reputation of the prophet. A descendant of El-Hadji-Aïssa repeated these predictions to me, and

the four following passages, literally translated, are extracted from the volume containing them.

“ Prepare for the Christians, their morning and evening repast,
For, by sin I swear, they come to the Oued-el-Heumar.
Joy shines in the eyes of their women,
Their soldiers light their fires upon our rocks,
They then return to their magnificent city, and to their splendid palaces.
The verdant Tunis will see, on her side, the children of Spain.
Arise, and behold through a cloud of dust, a thousand glittering standards.
It is the Christians sallying from Algiers, who advance towards the Oued-el-Heumar.
You who hear my words, speak not,
We are not near seeing these things ;
But I have seen them. I see them with my two eyes.
Algiers becomes the most magnificent of cities ;
She rejects the faithful from her bosom,
And is filled with Christians, who come in crowds across the sea.
Woe to the magnificent city ! Algiers is filled with Christians.
The mosques of the faithful are abandoned for the temples of the infidels.
The sleep of the Turk has been troubled ;
He has been vanquished. His reign is past.
He has filled full the measure of his injustice.
The power of God is irresistible.
Algiers was defended by brave warriors,
And the power of the Turks seemed to augment with their crimes.
They were addicted to every vice ;

They were drunkards, and slaves to every passion ;
They forgot their faith, and neglected all their duties.
A Christian army, protected by God, advances towards us ;
Every where victorious, nothing can stop them for an instant.
The Turks are humbled. Their crimes have precipitated
them into the abyss ;
Their wives even, are abandoned, and left defenceless ;
The power of the Christians will have no limits.
Algiers, the proud Algiers, for nearly three centuries has been
subjected to the tyranny of the Turks ;
Their power reached over the space of a year's travel ;
Their renown was spread abroad through the empires beyond
the sea :
Algiers, placing her trust in God, hoped for a better lot.

“ All that will happen is written ;
When thou seest the day of judgment approach, fear not.
Ask not what God will do. Such knowledge is not for thee.
The angel Tedzel will come, doubt it not,
Having overleaped the immensity of space, he will come ;
All ears will hear his words ;
The sun will rise where he now sets ;
The gate of Good will be closed, Evil alone will spread itself
abroad.
The dominion of the Turks is over ;
In Algiers none of the faithful remain ;
Woe to her beautiful port !
Woe to her walls !
Woe to the glorious city ! Woe to her masters !
It is to-day as if they had never possessed thee.
Thou art become the habitation of Christians ;
They have driven away the true faith, and its defenders ;
They have destroyed thy baths, thy mansions, and thy
gardens.
It is in vain that the seas were covered with thy ships.

Woe to thy brave Corsairs, who drove before them the
children of Spain !
Each of them returning, would bring into port a vessel laden
with slaves ;
And another, laden with nobles, made prisoners.
Such is the will of God. Praise be to God ! His acts are
inscrutable.

“ An innumerable army arrives ;
The French and Spaniards cross the sea.
Woe to the Turks ! The light of their glory is darkened ;
They were the sovereigns of the world.
Still, doubt it not : the Christians arrive ;
At the sight of their thousand standards
Algiers will become deserted.
The Christian army will increase ; they will be irresistible ;
The mosques will be abandoned.
Peace reigns in the country of the Christians :
They are no longer disquieted ; no longer fear they the
Corsairs,
Who used to strike terror through their homes,
Invading their country, and returning, leading their daughters
into slavery ;
For the Captains of these Corsairs were brave.
All that happens to Algiers, happens by the will of God.

“ Algiers falls into the power of the Christians ;
God has not permitted that His empire should endure.
The religion of the faithful is dead at Algiers—
At Algiers, which, until then, was the obstacle that withstood
the efforts of her enemies.
My eyes have seen it—I bear witness to what my eyes have
seen—
France comes to gather the harvest in our fields ;
The army of the Christians draws nigh with great power,

To drive out the inhabitants of Algiers ;
They enter by force ; the rich are plundered.
The Turks have lost their power.
At Algiers they adore idols,
After having adored ‘The Book’ and the true faith.
Such is the will of God ! Praise be to Him ! That which
He does, is above our comprehension.
God alone has made all things ; unaided has He done it ;
To man it is left only to praise Him.
The resolutions of God are as immovable as the mountains ;
He alone has power over all men, and His power is just.
He has no delegates—He has no equals.’

“ We were now arrived at the termination of our proposed expedition—one hundred and twenty leagues from Algiers, and eleven beyond Laghouat. No Turkish column had ever penetrated farther than Laghouat ; many Beys had been defeated there, and a column sent by Abd-el-Kader was entirely destroyed. Our Goum considered, and with reason, that our march so far inland, without any attempt to attack us, was sufficient proof of our power. We had no interest to induce us to go further ; the heat was becoming intense, and grass and water were diminishing. I might have returned by the Ouled Nail, but that tribe, not feeling sufficient confidence in us, would probably have taken to flight had we attempted to encamp among

them. I therefore preferred retracing the route by which I had come, where I was certain to meet with plenty of water, and probably a sufficiency of wood and grass.

"I had heard, about six days before, that the tribe of the Ouled Sidi Chikh had preached a religious war, and that Morocco was supporting Abd-el-Kader with powerful troops. Tedjini confirmed this true and important intelligence, and I had also received information that the events of the West had caused Colonel Eynard's column to be directed upon Tiaret, instead of upon the Djebel Ammour, as had been originally intended. It therefore appeared to me advisable, under these vexatious circumstances, to give special support to the Government of the Kalifa, and also to revise and complete what had been done. Accordingly, on the 31st we returned to Reg, where the pools of the Mzi were already becoming dry. The heat was intense, the thermometer standing at 104 degrees in the shade. On the 1st of June we arrived at Laghouat: there I received a letter, dated May 23rd, from General de Bar, who commanded the division of Algiers, in which he informed me that Morocco was

making preparations for war, and desired me to hasten my return.

“The Kalifa, when he had destroyed Abd-el-Kader’s garrison, had taken a piece of cannon, which he shewed me, and which, if appearances had not been so threatening, I might have brought back with me; but I thought it advisable to leave it with him, partly in order not to add to the difficulties of his position by an act of apparent distrust, and also to preserve to him, in case of necessity, the moral and physical advantages arising from the use of artillery.

“On the 2d, after a painful march of eight leagues through a deep sand, we reached Tejmout. There we concluded all the arrangements respecting the administration of the country, and I dismissed the Kalifa, and all the other chiefs. On the same day I received a letter from the Governor-General, dated Dellys, May 23rd, ordering me to repair as soon as possible to Tiaret, on account of the war with Morocco. On the 3rd we passed through the defiles of Debdeba and Kourfa. We were ignorant of what was going on in the Djebel Ammour, no chief having come to meet us. I there-

fore marched into these passes with great caution, having the ground carefully reconnoitred for a long distance by the Goum ; for it was evident that, if an attack was meditated, the most favourable spot for it would be the broken ground of the Djebel Ammour. From the entrance, as far as Macta Sidi Bousied, the mountains form several long defiles, which can only be passed in single file, and which would, of course, greatly increase the length of our column, with its convoy of 1400 beasts of burden. I therefore pushed on as far as the river Zierek, a march of eight leagues.

“ On the 4th we were at Macta Sidi Bousied. The chief of the Ksar, Zenina of the Ouled Nails, came to our camp and assured us that all was quiet in his neighbourhood. No messenger came from the Ksar, Sidi Bousied, of the Djebel Ammour, although we were close to their corn-fields. On the 5th we arrived at Mkraoula, on the plain, had no longer any danger to apprehend ; and at Taguine, which we reached on the 6th, we considered ourselves in greater safety than we could have believed it possible to have been in the Meteedjah a few

years ago. We had only thirteen men in hospital ; six of the cases were from injuries of the feet. I found the garrison of Taguine in excellent order ; we halted there one day, and on the 8th we started for Tiaret. On the same day, one hundred men and animals, all our useless baggage, with the unladen camels, accompanied by the Goum of the Tell, were dispatched to Boghar. They arrived there without accident in three days—a march of thirty leagues—but it was made easy to the men, by mounting them on the camels.

“ We reached Tiaret on the 11th, having only one man sick. The heat was intense ; and to this was now added another great annoyance—we were beset by the gad-fly, the severity of whose sting is sometimes sufficient to worry animals to death. After many attempts, we succeeded in protecting ourselves from them ; but the horses and mules suffered dreadfully, and we were obliged to collect all the camels at nine o’clock, and keep them till four surrounded by fires, in order that the smoke might drive away their tormentors.

“ Having left Boghar the 10th of May,

we had marched one hundred and seventy leagues in thirty-two days, and from Bou-drine to Tiaret we had made eighty leagues in twelve days. Our marches had been rendered toilsome by the heat, the sand, and the scarcity and bad quality of the water ; notwithstanding these hardships, we did not lose a single man, horse, or mule, and two camels only died. We did not meet with a single accident, nor did we abandon any of our stores. At Zarett, the night before we arrived at Tiaret, the Harars stole two muskets, and wounded one of the soldiers. This was the only theft that was committed during our march, and the tribe to which the culprits belonged were obliged to restore the value of the muskets, besides paying a heavy fine.

“ Not a single complaint has been brought against our soldiers, and their discipline has excited the admiration of the whole country, who were accustomed to see the camps of the Beys and of Abd-el-Kader plunder the gardens, the corn-fields, and all who could not defend themselves. At Aouéta our bivouac was close to the dilapidated walls of gardens full of fruit-trees, vegetables, ripe corn, and

barley. Although we were greatly in want of wood and forage, yet the rights of property were strictly protected. At Tejmout, where we first appeared, all the authority of the Kalifa was scarcely sufficient to calm the fears of the inhabitants and prevent their quitting the place ; but when they found that we paid for all we required, and that no one was ill-treated, they no longer meditated flight, but, giving us every proof of confidence, received the soldiers with a cordiality which I had never before witnessed in any part of Algeria."

CHAPTER XII.

The shops and shopkeepers of Algiers—Dress of the Jewish women—Their beauty—Moral condition of the Jews in Northern Africa—Moorish woman—Ride over the Boudjareeah—Gardens of the Dey—Hospital—Country house of the British Consul-General—Marshal Bugeaud's arrival—Unexpected dispatch of the Mail steamer—The Packet service of Algeria—Disliked by the naval officers—Bougia—Djidjeli—Defeat of the Kabiles—Philippeville—Arrival at Bôna.

WE spent some days after our return to Algiers in rambling about the streets, and visiting those places of interest in the environs that we had not previously seen. One day was occupied in making the round of the Moorish bazaars and shops, which are generally of the meanest description, both inside and out. A few trifling articles of gold and silver embroidery from Morocco,

a dozen or two of ornamented pipe-sticks, with otto of rose and jasmin, red caps and inferior silk scarfs from Tunis, form the sum-total of the ornamental wares of the native shopkeepers. Some of the more wealthy are, however, beginning to imitate their Christian rivals, and have fitted up their shops in a transition style between French and Algerine, with their most tempting articles exposed in the windows, and the shopman, instead of apathetically smoking his pipe, seated cross-legged on the counter, stands behind it, and shuffles slip-shod about, recommending his wares to a stranger's notice with as much pertinacity as the smartest shopmen of London or Paris.

In the little back streets and narrow lanes forming the upper part of the city, the shops frequented by the lower orders are merely square boxes inserted in the wall, with the side towards the street wanting. As a specimen, I will take one half way up the street leading to the Kasbah, where the united callings of a cook-shop keeper and dealer in provisions, were carried on. It was a small dark room—perhaps nine feet in width and twelve deep—cut out

of the ground floor of a dilapidated house, and rendered still darker by a shed that sheltered the open front, intercepting the greater portion of the light and air that descended into the street, through the narrow space left between the projecting stories of the houses nearly meeting overhead. A low counter occupied two-thirds of the shop, upon which was seated an old man with a straggling beard and unwashed face—a number of folds of dirty rags, that may once have been white, formed his turban, and the upper portion of his clothing consisted of a haick,* which harmonised with the colour of his head-dress. Around him, and within reach of his hand, were a number of baskets containing vegetables, dried pease, beans, garlic, couscousoo, and other edibles; and before him, over a charcoal fire, was a shallow iron pan half full of rancid oil, that sparked and bubbled as he turned the thin cakes of flour and water, frying for a thick-lipped negro, who, clad in a gaudy cotton jacket of a splendid furniture pattern, was

* An upper garment, a piece of white silk, cotton, or woollen cloth, a yard and a half wide, and five or six yards long, worn in graceful folds round the body.

leaning lazily against the opposite wall, watching the operation. Placed on shelves that ran round the shop were large earthen jars of oil and preserved olives ; each hole and corner was a receptacle for the undisturbed debris of generations of dirty predecessors, and the air was laden with the mingled odours of bad oil and decaying vegetables. This description will answer for almost any shop of the lower class, the only alterations requisite being to replace the provisions with the articles suited to another trade, and to change the odour of the cook-shop for any other detestable smell that may be appropriate ; the portrait of the dirty old shopkeeper need not be altered, as he will answer for any trade.

In the three principal streets, the Rues Bab Azoun, Bab-el-Oued, and De la Marine, the shops are entirely European, and many of them fitted up with as much taste as those of a second-rate provincial city in France. Generally speaking, articles of dress and luxury are nearly a third dearer than they are on the other side of the Mediterranean, and, as is to be expected, much of the cast-off finery of the Paris and Lyons shops is

disposed of in Algiers. Very few curious or valuable specimens of African workmanship are to be procured, for when, by chance, anything is seen, it is sent off to Paris, where anything *à l'Arabe* is the rage. In an armourer's shop we saw some of the spoils taken, or said to be taken, at the battle of Isly, but as the arms were neither remarkable for beauty nor rarity, and a very high price was demanded for them, we made no purchases.

Among the various costumes that crowd the streets of Algiers, none have such a singular appearance as the extraordinary head-dress worn by the Jewesses out of doors: from the back of the head a cone of light filagree, two feet high, rises at an angle of forty-five degrees, from which flows a long white veil that falls nearly to the ground, but leaves the face uncovered. Many of the Jewesses, when young, are strikingly handsome; like the men, they preserve unchanged the features of their race, and the dark and expressive eyes, the beautifully formed forehead, the raven hair, the arched eyebrow, and a peculiar softness of expression about the mouth, shew that the beauty of the

“daughters of Israel” has not degenerated. The Jewish children are perfectly lovely, especially the boys, who, at ten or eleven years of age, are models of beauty; after that, their features grow coarse.

Not much can be said in favour of the moral condition of the Jews in Northern Africa. They subsist entirely by commerce, and although among the higher class there are many scrupulously honest and honourable men, still, the majority will not hesitate to make money, if an opportunity offers, even in the most disgraceful manner. To all of their own nation they exercise the most profuse hospitality, and are charitable to their own poor. Education is confined entirely to the boys, who are taught in schools, and the parents usually pay according to their means; the children of very poor parents are educated gratis—that is to say, they receive just sufficient education to enable them to read the Old Testament in the original Hebrew.

The romance that we associate in our minds with the idea of the veiled beauties of the harem, would, even if it had withstood the realities of other eastern lands, vanish,

after an hour or two spent in Algiers. Nothing alluring meets the eye in the outward guise of a Moorish woman—nothing tempting the imagination to dwell with pleasure upon what may be concealed within. She has the appearance of a large bundle of dirty linen going to the wash, with a rolling, unsteady gait, having at the upper end a narrow opening, through which shines a pair of black eyes, that, for all you know to the contrary, may be the property of a great-grandmother.

Nothing was talked of in the military circles but the approaching expedition against the Kabiles, planned by Marshal Bugeaud. No particulars were known as to what was to be the extent of the force ; and the arrival of the Governor-general, who had been upon leave in France, was daily expected, and looked for with impatience. I may as well mention here, that this expedition never took place, as it was disapproved of by the French government, although not until the troops had been collected, and the preparations for the campaign nearly completed.

The seaward face of the Boudjareeah, the picturesque range of hills to the west-

ward of the city, is deeply indented with numerous little valleys, and the rocky beds of the mountain streams. Country houses, once the property of wealthy Moors, are placed in the most beautiful situations, and rendered accessible by winding paths through gardens and plantations of flowering shrubs and fruit trees. In this direction there are many delightful rides ; and on the 27th we set forth, under the guidance of Mr. St. John's younger son, to explore the beauties of the Boudjareeah, and visit his country residence, four miles distant from the city. Leaving Algiers by the Bab-el-Oued gate, and passing the "Fort des vingt-quatre heures" placed on a rock near the shore, flanking the north-western and eastern faces of the city, and serving also to strengthen the new fortifications now in progress, we reached the gardens of the late Dey, three quarters of a mile further on.

The garden is converted into the site of an immense military hospital, capable of containing with ease 5000 sick, who are accommodated in long buildings one story high, extending in streets across the garden. At this season there is but little sickness

throughout Algeria, and therefore the present inmates were few in number, but in the summer and autumn, large as the establishment is, it is not sufficient for the wants of the army. Where the new buildings do not interfere, the beautiful groves of fruit-trees have been left, as far as possible, without injury, and shady alleys of magnificent orange trees, mixed with flowering shrubs, plentifully watered by the crystal springs of the Boodjareeah, afford, even in the hottest summer's day, a grateful change to the enfeebled convalescent, wearied of the tedious monotony of the sick ward.

The situation is admirably adapted for the purpose to which it is applied. Placed at the foot of the steep assent of the Boodjareeah, and on the sea-shore, towards which the ground gently inclines, lying as it were, with outstretched arms and open bosom, to woo each cool refreshing breeze, that, in the stifling heats of summer, calms the wild throbbing of the burning brain, and stills the impetuous current boiling in the veins of the fever-stricken patient, who, as he feels the cool north wind that plays about his wasted frame, knows that a few hours

since it swept across the plains of France, his own loved France ; his sunken eye gleams with recruited strength, and hope once more returns, with cheering thoughts of home, of friends, and life.

Instead of taking the main road that wound up the hill to our left, we followed a rough path that skirted the sea, passing a small fort erected at the water's edge called "Fort des Anglais." After half an hour's ride in this direction, we began to ascend the heights by a narrow track that crept up the side of a rocky valley, through thickets of evergreen shrubs and flowering creepers, mingled with the aloe and the cactus. Wishing for rather a longer ride, we passed Mr. St. John's house, and then mounting still higher, made a circuit, and descended to it by the banks of a small stream of clear water.

As considerable additions were making to the house, preparatory to the summer, we did not see it to advantage, but the carefully kept grounds and gardens were flourishing in all the beauty of early spring. The views of the house from the different points in its neighbourhood, and from its terraces, are

beautiful. Built half way up the steep sides of the Boudjareeah, and embosomed in trees, the white walls glisten in the sun, seen here and there between the masses of bright green foliage, variegated by the dark unbending forms of a row of aged cypresses. From a walk in the garden, partially trelliced, over which was trained a profusion of roses, with the jasmine and the passion flower, the prospect was lovely. The side of every little valley had its villas, trees, and gardens, not a cloud dimmed the sky, and the wide expanse of the Mediterranean, calm and unruffled as the heaven it rivalled, drank in the brilliant sunlight but to restore it with a tenfold splendour from its glassy surface.

We returned to Algiers by a middle route, and then rode round the new fortifications, entering the city by the Babazoun gate. The evening passed as the two preceding ones had done, most agreeably, at Mr. St. John's. A gun fired between eight and nine announced the arrival of the steamer with the Governor-General and his suite, who did not land, but passed the night on board.

Next morning we were awakened at six

o'clock, by the batteries saluting the Marshal, and at breakfast we received a note from Mr. St. John, informing us that a levee would be held at noon, when, if we desired it, we might be presented. At eleven o'clock we were taken by surprise at hearing, that, with his accustomed celerity, the Marshal had ordered that the steamer, which was not to have left Algiers for Bôna till mid-day on the 31st, was to be despatched immediately, and that, if we missed this opportunity, we must remain in Algiers for another twelve days. Fortunately our passports had been left some days before at the Police-office ; and, thanks to the kindness and exertions of our friends, who succeeded in obtaining permission for us to embark at the last moment, after several other applicants had been refused, we were at one o'clock on board the war-steamer, the "Tenare."

We had now time to inquire what was the reason of this sudden dispatch of the mail-steamer three days before her time, and learned that ammunition was to be sent to Philippeville, for the use of the Constantine column, which was intended to act from that side against the Kabiles ; a detachment of

troops was also to be embarked for Bougia. As I have before mentioned that this much talked of expedition did not take place, it may suffice to state, that Marshal Bugeaud intended to enter Kabilia from the west at the head of a strong force, whilst two other columns entering simultaneously from the south and east, would co-operate with him in overrunning the country.

We were received with attention and civility by the officers of the steamer; and the captain had assigned us berths before we presented a general letter of introduction, which the admiral commanding on the station had been kind enough to give us, to the captains of the vessels employed on the African packet-service. The arrangements on board these vessels, for the convenience of civilians who may be led either by business or curiosity to visit the shores of Africa, are very indifferent. Naval and military officers are provided with free passages, join the mess of the officers of the ship, and have berths set aside for them; but the unlucky civilian is only permitted to take a deck passage, for which, however, he is not charged very extravagantly, and, wrapped up in his cloak

with the deck for a bed, and his carpet-bag for a pillow, he passes two, three, or more days in an agony of sea-sickness, wretched, helpless, unpitied, and in every body's way, with the satisfaction of knowing, that the worse the weather is, the longer he will be exposed to it. A cabin under the poop is appropriated to the passengers, for their meals, which are furnished by a restaurateur taken on board for that purpose.

This service is much disliked by the officers of the navy; and to a smart, active commander, desirous of keeping up the discipline of his ship, is a very vexatious one. Making every month, on an average, six trips to and fro, with the deck lumbered with men, women, and children, troops, stores, and baggage, it is impossible that the duties of a ship of war can be properly carried on; and the greatest credit is due to those who, under these untoward circumstances, keep their vessels and crews in the state of order and cleanliness they exhibit in harbour.

Owing to the quantity of ammunition to be shipped, 48,000 musket-cartridges, it was four o'clock when the "Tenare" weighed

anchor ; and steaming steadily across the Bay of Algiers, with a light breeze in our favour, and a smooth sea, Cape Matifou was rounded before dusk. At ten at night, we were off Dellys, the mail-bag was landed, the one for the eastward taken on board, and we continued our course.

Early next morning we were on deck ; a light haze hung over the surface of the water ; not a breath of air was stirring ; a long streamer of curling smoke spread itself sluggishly along our wake ; and a thin curtain of gauze-like vapour covered, but did not conceal, the mountainous shores of Kabilia.

As the sun rose higher in the heavens, the fog dispersed ; and standing close in under the land, we sailed past the rocky and inaccessible precipices of Cape Carbon, a promontory jutting from the almost perpendicular mountain of the Gouraya, which rises, crowned by a fort, to the height of 2200 feet above the level of the sea, with deep water within a few yards of the shore. Huge masses of rock, worn by the action of the winds and waves into a thousand fantastic forms, rise from the sea, and cling to

the mountains' sides, covered in places with thick brushwood, affording shelter and food to troops of monkeys. Through the centre of a rock projecting from the eastern face of the Gouraya, the waves have worn a lofty arch, under which, in calm weather, a boat can sail. As we rounded the cape, the town of Bougia, lying on the slope of the mountain behind it, came in view, and anchoring, to land the troops we had on board, we went on shore at ten o'clock.

Bougia was formerly a place of great trade, and of considerable importance, although its port, which scarce deserves that name, is exposed, and the anchorage bad. In former days, its principal trade consisted of large quantities of olive oil and bee's wax, brought down from the neighbouring hills by the Kabyles. The export of the latter article for the manufacture of candles in Europe, was so great, that in the course of time, the name of the town, called by the French "Bougie," was applied to the article it produced; and hence the origin of the well known word "bougie."

A powerful city at the period of the decline of the Roman empire, it fell suc-

cessively under the dominion of the various invaders of Africa. After having been possessed for centuries by the descendants of the Saracenic conquerors, it was seized in the early part of the sixteenth century by Spain, who was forced to relinquish her conquest, after having held it for nearly fifty years.

Charles V. put in here after his disastrous defeat before Algiers, and strengthened the existing fortifications. In 1833, Bougia was attacked and taken by a French squadron, the fire of the three forts being speedily silenced, and a landing effected ; but the Kabyles, who had come down from the Atlas to defend the town, fought desperately, retiring from house to house as the French advanced ; and it was only after a reinforcement had arrived from Algiers, that, at the end of four days' hard fighting, they remained masters of the town.

The town itself, with the exception of the Kasbah, and the other forts built by the Spaniards, is an immense ruin. Many of the habitations were destroyed at the period of its last capture ; and the inhabitants having deserted it, the hand of time, even

in the short space of twelve years, has done the rest. Numerous remains of the Roman city have been found ; and not very long ago, the upper portion of a female statue, of tolerable workmanship, was dug up. The foundations of the Roman wall are still to be seen ; and running up the side of the Gouraya, are the walls of the Saracenic city, enclosing a large extent of ground covered with shapeless heaps of ruins overgrown with grass, rank weeds, the cactus, and the aloe. Part of the sea-face of this wall remains in better preservation ; and on landing, the town is entered by a ruined gateway, probably the principal one of the ancient city.

To the south of Bougia, lies a rich and fertile plain, watered by the Ouled Messaoud, a considerable stream rising in a valley to the south of the lofty Djebel Jurjura. A circle of blockhouses, at the distance of three quarters of a league, and commencing with the fort perched on the summit of the Gouraya, extends around the town, and encloses the French territory in this part of Algeria. Except with a very strong party, these lines cannot be left, with-

out danger ; and even then it is not safe to proceed far, as a single Kabile will conceal himself for hours to get a fair shot at a party on their return. At present, the powerful tribes in the vicinity have patched up a hollow truce with the garrison, so that they are not now so harrassed with constant attacks as formerly ; but they are still not the less prisoners within their lines.

At eleven, we were again on board ; and Bougia, with its picturesque site—its rocks and ruins, festooned with a luxuriant growth of creepers—its new barracks, and its deserted town—its conspicuous café, and its mouldering arch, soon merged into a shapeless patch of white and green, as we continued our course along the coast to Djidjeli, where we arrived at three, P. M.

The hour allowed us on shore, was ample time for seeing everything. It is a wretched little town, with good barracks, defended by loop-holed walls just finished. A reef of rocks extending into the sea, forms an exposed anchorage, with only depth of water, near the town, for small Mediterranean trading-vessels. Upon one of the islands of this reef, a lighthouse has been erected. Some

fragments of columns lying near the gate, and a few shapeless masses of masonry, are all that remain of the Roman town of Igilgilis. The only remarkable passages in the history of Djidjeli are, that it was the first spot in Africa occupied by the famous brothers, the two Barbarossas ; and that, in 1664, Louis XIV. attempted to form there a French settlement, when the foundations of the fort that defends the town and harbour were laid. The settlement did not answer the expectations that had been formed of it, and was in consequence abandoned.

The situation of the garrison here is the same as that of Bougia, only with the drawback that the circle enclosed by the block-houses is more contracted, and that, if possible, the inhabitants are on worse terms with their neighbours the Kabiles, who have not, however ventured to attack the town since a bloody and signal defeat they suffered three or four years ago.

One night, favoured by the darkness, a strong force of Kabiles passed unobserved through the line of blockhouses, and reached a ledge of rock jutting out into the sea, and commanding the town, from whence they

fired upon the sentries, and at the windows of the houses. The troops were got quietly under arms, and the commandant, leaving a few men on the walls to return the fire of the Kabiles, sallied out with the garrison, came upon their rear, and enclosed them between his force and the sea. The Kabiles were attacked ; no prisoners were made, no quarter given ; there was no escape ; many found in the sea that death they were endeavouring to avoid from the French bayonets, and scarcely a man escaped. The spot was pointed out, and the attack described to us by an officer who had been present during the affray.

Next morning, the 30th, at two o'clock, we were off Philippeville. During the night, a heavy sea had arisen, and it was with some difficulty that the ammunition was landed. We did not go on shore, as we intended returning and staying a day or two at Philippeville, and at that early hour we should have seen but little. At eight o'clock, we continued our course, and landed at Bôna at five in the afternoon.

CHAPTER XIII.

Kabilia and the Kabiles—Origin and history of the latter—Their Personal appearance—Government—Language—Religion—Marabouts—Habitations—Agriculture—Manufactures—Enterprise and industry—Attachment to their native land—Their arms and method of warfare—Domestic relations—General character.

In the preceding chapter mention has been made of the Kabiles, a people, of whom, although but little is known, and that little does not offer those exciting changes, those alternations of misfortune and prosperity, that give such spirit to the records of other nations; yet whose history, barren though it be of great events, possesses a peculiar interest in itself.

By Kabilia is meant those ranges of the Lesser Atlas, that extend along the sea-coast from the eastern limit of the Meteed-

jah to near Philippeville, a distance of three degrees of longitude ; and where France, at present, possesses only the sea-ports of Dellys, Bougia, and Djidjeli. Buried in the depths of these mountains, defying successfully all efforts made for their subjection, the aboriginal inhabitants of Northern Africa have found in the Atlas an impregnable fortress, where, from the period when fabulous tradition gave birth to history, down to the present moment, generation after generation, have preserved inviolate their independence *.

The Kabiles, or Berbers, as they are indiscriminately called, form a race perfectly distinct from the Moors and Arabs, and, as far as the absence of certain proof will warrant, must be considered as the descendants of the nations dwelling along the Southern coast of the Mediterranean at the time of the foundation of Carthage by the Phœnicians, 886 b.c. ; or, going still further back,

* The Kabile tribes are spread over the whole range of the Lesser Atlas, from Morocco to Tunis ; but as, in the eastern and western portions, the mountains being more accessible, they are partially under the rule of the French, I have marked out the limits of what we may call Kabilia Proper, as above.

if Sallust's account of the invasion of Africa, by an army of Asiatics, whose leader was afterwards deified under the name of Hercules, be credited, they are probably derived from the remnant of the earlier inhabitants, who sought refuge from their powerful invaders in the wild valleys of the Atlas. By degrees, as the power of the Carthaginians increased, they spread themselves along the coast, as far as the Straits of Gibraltar; but, contented with the possession of the sea-ports, and a limited territory around each, the independence of the mountain tribes was not attacked. After the Roman conquest of Africa, and during the protracted struggle ending in the destruction of the Numidian power, the Kabies, distinguished from the Numidians by the name of "Barbari," remained unsubdued. The fierce inroads of the Vandals, whereby the cities of Africa were laid in ruins, were unfeared by the Kabies. Even the Arabs never penetrated their inmost valleys as conquerors; and although in process of time the faith of Mahomed became the religion of the Kabies, they remained free. To the Turkish rulers of Algiers they never submitted. To

the French authority, when attempted to be exerted over them, they have offered the fiercest opposition ; the hatred they bear towards the enemies of their independence, is increased by feelings of the wildest fanaticism towards the enemies of their faith, and trusting, as of old, to the natural defences of the country, and their own desperate but untrained courage, they will not lose the freedom which they have enjoyed for nearly 3000 years, without a long and bloody contest.

Procopius, a Byzantine historian of the sixth century, makes the Kabiles descendants of the nations driven by the Israelites out of the land of Canaan, and who, emigrating westward, became the first inhabitants of Northern Africa ; he, moreover states, that a column was still to be seen at "Tigisis," bearing an inscription in the Phœnician language to that effect. There are traditions of the same kind existing among themselves, and the Kabile historian, Ebn-Khal-Doun, who wrote in the fourteenth century, derives the Berber nation from Ber, the son of Mazigh, the son of Canaan. Some of the Arab tribes, who despise, although at the

same time they fear them, give the Kabiles a genealogy not the most flattering, stating them to be the children of genii by Arab women, whom they had stolen and carried off into the mountains.

In person the Kabiles are of the middle size, slight and well made, possessing great strength, activity, and powers of endurance; their features are less strongly marked than those of the Arabs, and their general appearance is vivacious and intelligent. Like the Arabs, they are divided into tribes, frequently at war with each other on the most trifling pretexts, yet a common enemy proves at once a bond of union. Each tribe is governed by a Sheick, who is usually chosen from the principal family in it, either on account of his wealth or talents. He commands them in time of war, and, during peace, if he is supported by the marabout, has an absolute control over his people, who, however, are not bound to him in any way, and can depose him if found incompetent, by selecting another Sheick.

Their language, which they call "Shouvia," is general to the Kabile nation, though several

dialects are spoken among the tribes ; it is not only totally different from the Arabic, but no affinity can be traced between it and any other language, ancient or modern, with which we are acquainted. The common opinion seems to be, that the "Shouvia" is derived from the Phœnician ; but every attempt hitherto made, to establish a connexion between them by means of what little is known of the ancient tongue of Carthage has failed, so that, with a greater probability of being correct, we may consider the present language of the Kabies as co-existent with themselves, and to be that of the aboriginal inhabitants of Northern Africa. Arabic is spoken by the greater number of the tribes as a foreign language ; yet there are many who, having but little communication with the plain, speak only their native tongue.

The population of this portion of Algeria, in the absence of any fixed data, is estimated at 80,000, which will give a force of only about 16,000 men capable of bearing arms ; to which we may add 4,000 boys and old men, who would be able to take part in a defensive war. The Kabies must not be

confounded with those Arabs who have left the plain, and imitating to a certain extent the Berber mode of life, have built huts and formed villages on the lower slopes of the Atlas, although the Moors include all the inhabitants of the country under the general appellation of Bedoueens.

Their religion is, nominally, Islamism, with which many ancient superstitions are mingled, relicts of the worship of their ancestors, who adored the heavenly bodies and the elements. Their fanaticism is in proportion to their ignorance, and the commands of a marabout are obeyed without a murmur, as the will of God. These marabouts, or holy men, are more numerous than among the Arabs, and held in greater esteem, although generally not so well educated. They pass a life of hardship and austerity, devoting themselves entirely to meditation and the worship of God, and interfere in worldly affairs only for the purpose of doing good. Under the protection of a marabout, a Kabyle may pass unharmed through the midst of a hostile tribe; and in the event of feuds, they are the general

peace-makers. Some * of the more distinguished profess to have the power of working miracles, the gift of prophecy, and even the privilege of receiving the divine commands from God himself; a French writer well describes the position they hold in the minds of their followers by the sentence, “*Ce sont des saints vivans, placés par l’opinion, entre les hommes et les anges.*” It is worthy of remark, that the absolute power they possess is rarely if ever abused. Many of them are wealthy, as they receive the offerings of the people, who consult them on all occasions, and the office of marabout generally descends in the family when any of its members are inclined to follow the profession. In this case the career of the candidate for sanctity is greatly facilitated, a certain portion of holiness being considered as hereditary, and the son is held at once in the same veneration as his father, to acquire which for himself would have taken years of rigid austerity.

When a marabout dies, the spot where he

* The following remarks apply equally to the marabouts of the Kabyles, Arabs, and Moors.

is buried partakes of the sanctity with which the holy man was invested during his life ; the body is placed in an oblong wooden case, carved, and ornamented with patterns in red and green, the two sacred colours ; a square building, surmounted by a dome, is erected over the shrine, and the exterior whitewashed. If the deceased has been a saint of extraordinary celebrity, many offerings are made at his grave, which are the perquisites of some living marabout in the vicinity, who keeps the tomb in proper order. The situations chosen for these tombs, or rather sepulchral chapels, are usually the most beautiful or romantic spots ; perched on a rock overhanging a river or a glen, and surrounded with groves of trees, or built on a mountain's side, so as to be visible from a great distance, they form a characteristic and picturesque feature of the scenery. We entered several at different retired places, where we were not liable to be observed, the presence of a Christian in so holy a spot being considered a desecration ; but we never saw any variation in the arrangements, except as to size ; they are always left open for the admittance of the faithful, who come to say their prayers, and

invoke a blessing upon themselves and their contemplated undertakings.

With regard to the many charms and superstitions of the Kabiles, there is one especially worthy of notice, and that is, their use of the symbol of the Cross, to which they impute many unknown virtues, using it as a talisman, inserting it among the ornaments carved on their weapons, &c., and sometimes having it tattooed on their persons, as a preservative from the much dreaded evil eye. We are ignorant whether the Kabiles, as a nation, ever professed Christianity; but it would seem from this, that at least the outward forms of the early Christians had at one period penetrated into the heart of their mountains.

In their own country they exhibit an industry that we may look for in vain amongst the Moors and Arabs. Their low huts, although small and mean, are generally built of stone and lime, or of sun-dried bricks, and surrounded with well-kept gardens, orchards, and corn-fields. Besides the lower parts of the valleys, they cultivate the steep faces of the mountains, forming terrace above terrace, by means of sustaining walls.

They also irrigate, wherever it is practicable. Their vineyards and olive-gardens are carefully cultivated, and the oil taken to market in skins, forms, with the hides of their numerous flocks of cattle, sheep, and goats, the principal articles of their commerce.

They manufacture their own weapons, agricultural implements, knives, gunpowder, coarse cloth, and pottery. They have mines of iron, lead, and copper, which they work themselves; they understand the method of smelting the ore; their workmanship in metal, although rude, is very fair, considering the tools they employ; and as a proof of their ingenuity, they have succeeded in imitating the French five franc pieces in base metal well enough to deceive the Arabs who have not been in the habit of seeing much French money.

In one point there is a strong resemblance between the Swiss and Kabile character. Devotedly attached to their native mountains and their tribes, they are imbued with a spirit of enterprise that leads them in youth to seek their fortunes in other countries. They are to be found in all the towns and villages of Northern Africa as domestic ser-

vants or labourers; they are industrious, good-tempered, and honest, living in the most parsimonious manner, wearing their clothes, through economy, until they drop to pieces from age, and exerting all their energies to amass a sum of money with which to return and pass the remainder of their lives at home.

Whilst absent, their attachment to their native land and their tribe is such, that the instant a Kabile learns that war has broken out, or that danger threatens, he throws up his situation, however lucrative it may be, allows no consideration of self-interest to interfere with what he looks upon as his imperative duty, and, regardless of distance, sets forth to aid his tribe. An instance of this, with reference to the proposed expedition against the Kabiles, which was now openly talked of, occurred in Bôna, a day or two before we arrived. A labourer, who had been for some time in the employment of a French officer who paid him liberally, came to his master and gave him notice that on a certain day he must leave his service. The officer asked his reasons for wishing to go away: was he dissatisfied with his wages?

with his treatment? or was the work too severe?—to all of which he answered that he was perfectly satisfied, but it was quite impossible he could remain, as the French were going to attack his country, and he must join his tribe to assist in repelling the invaders, but that, when the fighting was over, if he were not killed, he would return to Bôna and resume his work.

The arms used by the Kabyles are guns from six to seven feet in length, pistols, and yataghans, nearly all of their own manufacture. European fire-arms are much valued, when they can be procured. Having few horses, their principal strength consists of infantry, but in the open plain their undisciplined courage is of no avail against regular troops; they charge with fury in a disordered mass, and if repulsed, disperse instantly to rally again at a distance, never waiting to receive an attack if they can possibly avoid it. When defending their own fastnesses the case is very different: they then become determined and formidable enemies; every foot of ground is obstinately contested: each separate rock and bush in a mountain pass conceals an enemy, and

forms a petty fortress ; the invading column, perhaps, succeeds in forcing a passage, and then the Kabiles, dispersed but not beaten, attack the rear with the same vigour with which, an hour before, they opposed the advance of the enemy. A day's march is a continued combat, and miserable is the lot of the wounded, the sick, or the straggler, who falls into their hands : no mercy is shewn ; if the prisoner's life be spared for a time, he suffers at last a painful death ; but a yataghan, placed under the throat and drawn upwards, whilst the head is pressed down with the left hand is the prisoner's usual fate, and the severed trophy is borne off in triumph.

When a Kabile of the lower class returns to his home, he considers that he has fully attained the object of his existence if his savings provide him with a wife (her price averaging about a hundred and fifty francs), a "gourbie" or hut, his arms and a supply of ammunition, a spade, a mule, or two asses, and that indispensable safeguard to every Kabile hut or Arab tent, a dog ; if, in addition, his habitation is built of stone, and he possess a horse, a yoke of oxen, and a

plough, he has arrived at the summit of his wishes. Although still eager to make money, it is, when he has done so, of little or no use to him, except in case of unforeseen misfortune, and buried, for security, in some safe spot, the existence of his treasure is a secret confined to his own breast, and often a secret which he dies without revealing. He values his arms more highly than all the rest of his property, and, if reduced to poverty, the last article that he parts with is his gun. The social condition of women among the Kabies is rather superior to that of the Arab females ; they are never veiled, live more on terms of equality with the men, and although they work hard, their labour is shared by their husbands.

The lights and shadows of the Kabile character are strongly defined. Passionately attached to their native mountains and their tribe, and having lively, social dispositions, they are inhospitable among themselves, and jealous of strangers ; brave, trustworthy, and easily contented, they are cruel and avaricious, but every feeling yields in intensity to their unconquerable love of independence.

Few travellers have given any account of

this people from personal observation in Kabilia, and of late years, as at present, the country is closed to Europeans by the well-founded fears of the inhabitants : even Arabs have not escaped, as it is not long since a party of Arab traders, supposed to be in the French interest, were all murdered.

I now conclude the sketch of this remarkable people, and it only remains to be observed that the materials from which it is taken are the accounts of the travellers who have written upon them, carefully collated, and the results of the information I took every opportunity of collecting on the spot, from the French officers who had traversed some parts of the country with a military force, and from those whose residence in Algeria had led them to investigate the history and customs of one of the most remarkable nations in Africa.

CHAPTER XIV.

Bôna—Destroyed in 1832—Defence of the Kasbah by You-souf and Captain d'Armandy—Square and streets—Kasbah—The Foreign Legion—Fort Cigogne—Maltese—Party at General Randon's—Ride to the ruins of Hippo Regius—Its ancient history—St. Augustin—His monument—Ancient harbour in the Seybouse—Why it should be re-opened—Government stud—Forest of the Djebel Edough—Storm and Shipwreck—Quarantine absurdities—Arrival at Tunis.

ON the western side of a gulf formed by the Capes de Garde and Rosa stands the town of Bôna, with its eastern face built on the extreme edge of the precipitous coast that extends round the Cape de Garde, and terminates with the rocky promontory that, crowned by the Fort Cigogne, forms the southern angle of the town. Enclosed within walls nearly a mile in extent, flanked by numerous square towers, Bôna is rapidly rising from the heap of ruins to which it had been reduced in 1832 by Ben Aïssa, who

commanded the troops of the Bey of Constantine in an attack against the town and Kasbah. Ben Aïssa succeeded in obtaining possession of the former, and plundered and burnt it when foiled in his attempts against the latter by the chivalrous and gallant daring of Captain d'Armandy and the celebrated Yousouf, who, with the small force of thirty sailors from a brig of war, threw themselves into the Kasbah, then held by a garrison of Turkish soldiers for Ibrahim, the late Bey of Constantine, who professed to hold it under the French Government, but had deserted his post. In a few days the Turks mutinied against their new commanders, who, with the French sailors, would have been murdered, and the Kasbah given up to the Arabs, but for the prompt action and fearless courage of Yousouf, who on discovering the plot, killed the two ring-leaders with his own hand in the ranks, and then placing himself at the head of the terror-stricken mutineers before they had time to recover from their astonishment, led them against the enemy, defeated the besiegers, drove them from the ruins of the town, and this caused the very men who in

the morning had conspired against his life, to obey his orders with a slavish submission ; a proof of what may be accomplished by the unhesitating resolution of a single man.

On landing, we went to the "Lion d'Or," a comfortable hotel in a street branching off from the Grand Square, where, being Sunday evening, the greater part of the population were assembled around the band of the battalion of the Foreign Legion that formed the garrison of Bôna. Next morning we had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of General Randon and M. de Soubeyran, the chief military and civil authorities of the district.

During the afternoon, we took a long walk, commencing with the town, which contains nothing very remarkable. A handsome square with a fountain has been laid out in its centre, and, besides some smaller ones, three well-built streets of French houses lead to three out of the four gates. The destruction of the greater portion of the Arab town, in 1832, has left few of the old streets standing ; those that have escaped are narrow winding lanes of mean looking houses. Three-fourths of the buildings are French ;

and a mosque in the square, with a graceful, slender minaret, and the crenelated walls, too slight to mount artillery, except of the lightest kind, are the principal remains of the old town.

Passing out of the north gate, opposite to which, on the slope of the hill, are the cavalry barracks with their ranges of stabling, and near them a well stocked park of artillery, we ascended the steep hill upon which the kasbah is built, overlooking, and completely commanding the town, at a distance of four hundred yards, and having an elevation of three hundred and forty feet above the level of the sea. From the ramparts, we had a beautiful and extensive view over the rich plain of Bôna; a dead level of bright green, with two distant clumps of trees rising like rocky islands from a sea of grass, ten leagues in length and five in breadth, bounded on the north by the Mediterranean, and enclosed by a semicircle of lofty mountains stretching southward from the coast. The ground-plan of the Kasbah follows the oblong form of the plateau on the summit of the hill, and the walls are flanked by the usual square towers, which, as

well as the defences of the town, have been thoroughly repaired by the French.

The present garrison consists of a battalion of the second regiment of the "Légion Etrangère," a force of nearly five thousand men, composed of adventurers, deserters, and escaped criminals of all nations. Recruited from such materials, it must be expected, that it is only by severe punishment and stringent regulations, that discipline can be preserved. There must be an exception made in favour of the Poles, who form an entire battalion, the best conducted, and the most distinguished in the Legion. Wherever it has been employed, the Foreign Legion has been conspicuous for its reckless bravery, and in many instances, for its ferocious conduct towards the Arabs. The men composing it are generally, in person, finer looking than the average of the French infantry of the line, especially the Italians and Spaniards. In their ranks, there are only two or three Englishmen, and they belong to the first regiment, now quartered in the province of Oran. The officers are chiefly French, with the exception of a few Poles, who served in the last

revolution of their country. Very few who join the Legion as privates ever attain the rank of officer.

Descending the hill of the kasbah, we re-entered the town, and proceeded to Fort Cigogne, placed on a rock jutting out one hundred yards into the sea, protecting the anchorage, and forming a small harbour on the southern side of the town, for boats and coasting vessels. Hanging about the landing-place, were a number of Maltese, who, more than half African by descent and language, swarm about the ports of Algeria, Tunis, and Tripoli. A large proportion of the boats that ply between the shipping and the shore, belongs to them ; and if not employed as boatmen or porters, they enter into various petty trading speculations : traversing the country with a few pieces of cotton, cloth, and coarse cutlery. They are hard-working, industrious rogues, who will cheat you if they can in the way of business, never speak the truth, and are quarrelsome and vindictive, often using the knife as a final argument to settle their disputes.

We dined with General Randon, and

Bôna boasting of eleven ladies, (a number many of our Indian stations could not muster,) a large party assembled in the evening, which passed most agreeably with dancing, music, and cards. The house has not been long finished, the rooms are well proportioned, and the principal saloon is a handsome apartment, appropriately furnished with the joint produce of France and Algeria. Its polished parquet of African oak, from the neighbouring forest of Edough, is half covered with a profusion of lion and panther skins ; and the walls are decorated with a variety of weapons, and with lances bearing the national colours of France.

At eleven o'clock next morning, General Randon's horses were at the door of the hotel ; and leaving the town by the Constantine gate, outside of which the Arab market is held, we rode along the sea shore until we arrived at a Roman bridge of thirteen arches, crossing the river Boudjemah, a mile from the town. Passing the bridge, which is in perfect preservation, we soon found ourselves on the site of Hippo Regius, a city at one time second alone to Carthage, and now her equal in ruin and

desolation. Built on the declivity of an oblong hill, rising from the plain, and washed on either side by the rivers Seybouse and Boudjemah, the city sloped gently down towards the sea. The soil was fertile ; the scenery beautiful ; and, easily accessible by land and water, a finer situation could not have been chosen for the residence of the ancient sovereigns of Numidia.

But little remains of its former magnificence : a few shapeless masses of concrete masonry, hewn stones, and foundations, scattered over, or buried beneath the soil, and the huge cisterns, once supplied with water by an aqueduct from the neighbouring range of the Djebel Edough, are all that time has left of the palaces of its kings ; of the fortifications that withstood Genseric and the Vandals for fourteen months ; and of the churches where St. Augustin raised his powerful voice against the increasing corruption of the Christians of the fifth century. Captured by Genseric, A. D. 431, after a lengthened defence by Boniface ; who, deceived into rebellion, had sought the assistance of the Vandals, and then, seeing his error when too late, was unable to save

Africa from the ruin he himself had caused ; retaken by Belisarius, after an interval of a hundred and two years, the city was, at the end of the seventh century, taken and utterly destroyed by the Arabs. The ruins have served as a quarry, from whence the materials employed in building the present town of Bôna were supplied.

Much interest attaches to Hippo Regius as the scene of the labours of its bishop, St. Augustin, and of his death, at the patriarchal age of seventy-six, in the third month of the siege by the Vandals. An upright, conscientious man, living at a corrupt and licentious period, and zealous in the cause of religion, he was reverenced and beloved by all. When his episcopal city was besieged, the spirit of the aged bishop rose with the emergency ; he strengthened and consoled his now repentant friend Boniface, the cause of all the evil ; and toiling unremittingly amongst his people to mitigate their sufferings from the enemy, and from famine, he sank under the fatigue, and his latter days were like a waning lamp, whose flickering light shines brightly with a dying effort, and expires. With a laudable motive,

but with the worst possible taste, a sort of altar tomb has been erected by the French in the midst of the ruins, to his memory. Ugly as it is, placed in such a lovely situation, it would have passed without remark, but for the means adopted to identify the modern tomb with the departed saint. In the year 500, the African bishops, exiled by Thrasimund, king of the Vandals, carried the relics of St. Augustin, seventy years after his death, with them to Sardinia. They were afterwards taken to Italy ; and in 1843, some French bishops, unable to procure the whole body, which its Italian possessors would not part with, were obliged to be content with the left arm, which was brought over and deposited, with great pomp, in a grave dug amidst the ruins of the ancient city, and the tomb above-mentioned erected over it.

Luxuriant gardens and orchards cover the sides of the hill, and the mouldering remnants of the cisterns where the arches have given way, are picturesquely clothed with shrubs and creepers ; many remain in a tolerable state of preservation, and are used by the inhabitants of some adjoining hovels as stabling for their cattle. Returning to

the road leading to Constantine, and sweeping round the base of the hill, we arrived at the Seybouse, where the embankments of the Roman port are to be traced for a considerable distance. The river has still from fifteen to twenty feet of water at this point, and runs sluggishly over a clayey bottom; but a shifting bar of sand and mud at its mouth obstructs the navigation. It is evident that the sea was formerly several hundred yards nearer the city, and that the annual deposits of the Seybouse and the Boudjemah have been gradually extending the limits of the coast. The capabilities of this river seem to have been completely overlooked by the French government, the channel over the bar, even at the driest seasons, has seldom less than ten feet of water; and the expense of deepening the existing or forming a new entrance to the port would not, probably, exceed the value of the ships and cargoes that are annually lost upon the coast of Algeria, where a secure harbour is not to be found. As a small naval station, and as a commercial port, it would conduce greatly to the prosperity of the Province of Constantine; the

forests of Edough are full of magnificent oak timber, the undisturbed growth of ages, the native tribes in the vicinity are becoming more accustomed to their new masters, or at least are now quiet, perceiving the uselessness of struggling at the present moment, against the hated yoke ; and by the strong arm of military authority, stretched over the fertile and extensive plain of Bôna, corn and cattle, the staple productions of the district, are steadily increasing under the system of forced tranquillity that is maintained. Lead ore has been lately discovered near Guelma ; the specimens brought in by the Arabs are rich in metal, and they state that the ore lies close to the surface and could be easily worked. European colonists have already commenced cultivating the land in the neighbourhood of the town on the banks of the two rivers ; and as the confidence of the settlers increased, they extended their circle, so that there are now farm-houses three and even four miles from Bôna, when a few years ago the walls of the town were considered to be scarcely sufficient protection. For all these reasons, the re-opening of the

ancient port of Hippo Regius would be an immense advantage; a secure harbour would be formed for vessels of a considerable size, more easily defended against a hostile squadron than the open roadstead of Bôna; foreign merchandise would be landed direct, and the produce of the province shipped with ease on board vessels lying alongside the quays of the Seybouse.

Extending our ride for some distance along the road to the interior, we passed the buildings lately erected for the stud to be established by government, with the object of improving the breed of horses among the Arabs. With this view, the stud is to consist of stallions only, as the degeneracy of the present breed in Algeria is mainly to be attributed to the neglect shewn by the Arabs with regard to the choice of a sire, considering the breeding of the dam to be of much greater importance. The demand for horses of a superior class is likewise so great, that the price offered frequently tempts the owners to sell them and content themselves with those of an inferior description. Although they will not part with their mares, the tribes are thus dis-

possessed of the more valuable animals, and are rendered year after year, less and less capable of breeding fine horses.

There are to be three establishments, one in each province, and the entire expense is to be borne by government. The officer who is to be placed in charge of the stud at Bôna, has received orders to proceed to Tunis for the purpose of purchasing ; he is authorised to give an average price of 2000 francs per horse ; a sum that ought to purchase the finest animals in the Regency.

After having cantered over the plain, we re-crossed the Boudjemah, and passing the western side of a circular marabout, which, commanding the passage of the bridge, has had its walls loopholed, the body of its holy inmate tumbled into the river, and now makes a capital guard-room, we rode through the rich swampy land lying between the sea and the base of the wooded mountains of Edough. Once carefully cultivated, successive ages of neglect had rendered this fertile spot, subject to the inundations of the Boudjemah, a pestilential morass, of which only a small portion was under cultivation at the period of the capture of Bôna by the French. A

canal has been cut, and other means resorted to, with success, to drain it, as is shown by the improved healthiness of the town, and by the country-houses built or building in the centre of flourishing gardens in its vicinity. On reaching the road, constructed by the troops, leading from Bôna to the Djebel Edough, we turned our horses' heads home-wards, and passing a marble column erected to commemorate the opening of the road, and inscribed to General Randon by the troops employed on the work, we entered the town by the North gate. The rest of the day I spent on foot, rambling leisurely over the ruins of Hippo, and, lying on the thick soft turf that covered the vaulted roofs of the ancient cisterns, stretched beneath the sheltering foliage of a venerable olive, I enjoyed and sketched by turns the splendid prospect before me.

During the afternoon the small steamer, that, placed at the disposal of the French Consul-General, keeps up an uncertain communication between Tunis and Bôna, had arrived. It was necessary that we should decide upon our future arrangements, as two routes now lay before us. One was to take

advantage of the return of the "Liamone," and proceed to Tunis, returning to Bôna by land, and then visiting Constantine, &c., on our way back to Algiers ; or else we were to travel first through the province of Constantine, and either await the next trip of the steamer, hire a small coasting-vessel that might be ten days or a fortnight on the voyage, or find our way by land to Tunis. A council was held, the pros and cons of the two schemes fairly stated, and the first was, for many reasons, decided upon. There was, however, one drawback ; and that was, it involved the loss of our friend the Count de Goltz, whose engagements would not allow of extending his journey to Tunis.

The magnificent forest that covers the Djebel Edough, which every stranger ought to visit, we agreed to leave until our return, and occupied the next day by a long walk to the other side of the Cape de Garde. Passing by the aqueduct that, repaired and improved, now supplies the town with water, we walked through the "Pépinière," an establishment on a smaller scale, and having the same object in view, as the Experimental Gardens at Algiers. Keeping in a north-

westerly direction, we reached the summit of the hill, the highest point on the Cape, and from whence the sea was visible on both sides, with Fort Gênois and a marabout, where a holy man, of great sanctity, lies buried, placed on the rocky promontory. The Arabs have named it "Ras-el-Hamrah," or the "Red Cape," from the rocks and soil being in many places tinged with that colour by the presence of iron. Three marble quarries, worked by the Romans, are still to be seen, with partially detached blocks and columns, rough-hewn on their sides; the marble is white, veined with pale bluish grey, and a slab I saw in Bôna was close-grained, and had received a fine polish: We descended the hill on the opposite side towards the sea, and returned homewards by the coast, which is defended by Fort Gênois and two batteries; near one of them is an extensive barrack, at present unoccupied. Standing in the sea, a gun-shot from the shore, is an isolated rock called the Lion of Bôna, from the extraordinary resemblance it bears to a colossal lion, couchant and crowned.

The wind, which had been gradually rising during the afternoon, now blew with violence, and the tideless Mediterranean, yesterday so still and calm, murmuring softly as its gentle undulations touched the shore, now dashed its roaring waves against the cliffs, and in its fury cast high in air a mingled cloud of spray and foam. On nearing the anchorage, we observed two merchantmen dragging from their anchors ; they fell foul of each other, and for a moment their destruction seemed inevitable ; they were driving fast upon a rocky shore, no assistance could be afforded them, as two boats had already upset in the attempt, and in another minute it would have been too late, when, succeeding in getting some sail set, they swung clear, rounded Fort Cigogne (the brig so closely, that, for a breathless moment, we imagined she had struck), and ran on shore in the shallow harbour under the fort. A small barque, whose crew deserted her the instant there was any danger, also went on shore, and several boats were wrecked. One life only was lost ; and the three ships, although much damaged, were got off in a day or two.

Fortunately there were very few vessels in the roads, or the loss of life and property might have been severe.

The little Liamone getting up her steam, was forced to run for shelter under the cliffs of Fort Gênois, where there is better holding ground. At one time it was feared she would be lost, and the quarantine officers were in a dreadful state of excitement, as, coming from Tunis, she was in quarantine, and any personal communication, such as saving the life of a drowning man, would subject those who pulled him out of the water to a purifying imprisonment of nine days ; or if any of the crew who might escape in the confusion entered the town, Bôna, its inhabitants, authorities, and garrison, would all become unclean ; any communication for the space of nine days would have placed Algiers itself in the same state with regard to Europe : and this serious inconvenience, this stoppage of all business, public and private, arising from such a trifling cause, only seems the more ridiculous, when we consider that Tunis is healthier than Algeria, that there the plague has been unknown for more than a quarter

of a century, and that an unrestrained intercourse is kept up by land between the two Regencies, so that a traveller, actually infected with the plague, would be received unquestioned if he kept his own counsel and journeyed by land, while, if he arrive by sea, having been exposed to the fresh breeze for days, he is carefully examined by a doctor, whose learned head shakes mysteriously at the sight of a furred tongue, or a bruise received the last tumble he had from his berth ; and even if, after all, warranted sound and in good condition, he is, to make sure, locked up for nine days.

Never was the uselessness of the stringent quarantine laws, at present enforced throughout the Mediterranean, better shewn than in the case of Algeria. As an important colony, it was found that her intercourse with France, thus clogged, could not be satisfactorily carried on, either by the Government or private individuals. By degrees the period of quarantine was reduced, and then abolished, leaving, however, the power of resuming the system, in the event of the plague, or any other disease of the same nature, breaking out in Algeria. It is to

be hoped, now every effort is being made to facilitate the intercourse of nations, that England will follow the example set by France, and that together they will relax the present regulations, so absurdly severe, and relieve the commerce of the Mediterranean from the incubus that weighs so heavily upon it. The stumbling-block in the way of any improvement in the system, is said to be the Italian states. To them it is a matter of profit and loss, and not of health. Their governments make money by it, and the quarantine establishments provide numerous places for a set of greedy officials.

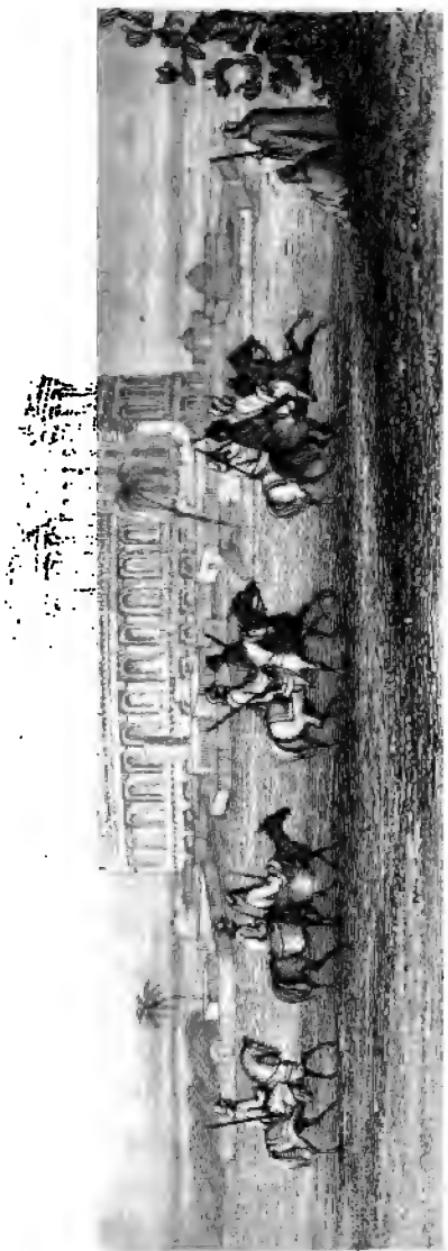
On the 4th of April we took leave of our Bôna friends, and embarked at two o'clock on board the "Liamone," the small Government steamer previously mentioned, of fifty horse power, originally built to run on a river of the same name in Corsica. Count de Goltz had left for Constantine the previous day, to make the same journey that we accomplished on our return from Tunis. The passengers, consisting of the officer in charge of the Government stud, ordered to Tunis to purchase horses, a veterinary surgeon, and twenty dismounted dragoons, half

a dozen civilians, and ourselves, filled every corner unoccupied by the officers and crew. The captain and officers gave us berths, and most kindly invited us to become their guests while on board.

The weather looked threatening, and an evidence of the storm of the 2nd still remained in the long swell rolling sullenly towards the shore, on the heaving surface of which our little vessel pitched and tossed, straining fretfully at her cable, as if impatient of the delay. At half-past three we weighed anchor ; during the night the wind freshened, and came right ahead ; steaming along slowly, at eleven next day we were off the Fratelli Islands, and made Cape Blanc, the most northern point of the Regency of Tunis, at two P.M. ; at sun-set we made Cape Zebib ; and, rounding Cape Carthage at six o'clock on the morning of the 6th of April, anchored in the roads of Tunis.

END OF VOLUME I.

[REDACTED]



ALGERIA AND TUNIS

IN 1845.

BY

CAPTAIN J. CLARK KENNEDY,
18TH (ROYAL IRISH) REGIMENT.

AN ACCOUNT OF A JOURNEY
MADE THROUGH THE TWO REGENCIES
BY
VISCOUNT FEILDING AND CAPT. KENNEDY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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ALGERIA AND TUNIS

IN 1845.

CHAPTER I.

Land at the Goletta—Arrive at Tunis—Sketch of its History—Population of the City—Situation—View from the Belvedere—The Bardo—Interview with the Bey—Architecture of Tunis—“Sooks”—Shops—Sales by Auction—Honesty of the crowd—Flowers—Annual expedition to the Jereed—Bey of the Camp.

THE morning of our arrival at Tunis was cold and bleak ; a sickly fog rested upon the land ; and every object, borrowing the hue of the dull gray sky, looked dreary and comfortless. We remained at anchor in the roads until the mail-bag was landed and orders were received from the shore, when the Liamone proceeded to take up her usual berth in the Goletta,—the narrow canal, strongly fortified, that connects the

Lake of Tunis with the sea. Passing the custom-house without the slightest trouble, the mention of the words English officer acting like a talisman, we hired one of the clumsy, flat-bottomed boats that carry on the traffic of the lake, and crossed to Tunis, a distance of ten miles. At the landing-place we found Sir Thomas Reade, the Consul-General, who, expecting our arrival by the steamer, came down to meet us, and insisted on our taking up our quarters in the consulate, where we were soon installed with all the luxuries and comforts of home around us.

By way of introduction to the succeeding chapters, descriptive of Tunis as it at present exists, a slight sketch of its history may not be considered out of place.

The city of Tunis, although, according to the ancient historians, founded at an earlier period than that of Carthage, was of little importance until after the final destruction of that city by the Saracens, A. D. 698 ; up to this time she had shared the varying fortunes of her powerful neighbour, falling successively into the hands of the various nations that had made Africa their battle-ground. Safe, however, in her appa-

rent insignificance, she still exists, and is the capital of a sovereign state, whilst generation after generation have grown their crops where Carthage stood. Under the Mahometan rule, Tunis gradually increased in consequence. Foreign warfare, intestine discord, and frequent revolutions, contributed to divide the African conquests of the Saracens into independent states. The holy city of Kairouan, after a time, ceased to be the capital, and Tunis became the seat of government of that state to which she has given her name. Until the early part of the sixteenth century there is little to be related of general interest, except the expedition of St. Louis, at the head of the sixth crusade, in 1270, and his death amid the ruins of Carthage. In 1531, the younger Barbarossa, assisted by a Turkish force, treacherously seized upon Tunis, on the pretext of restoring Alraschid, the elder brother of the reigning prince, and in whose name he professed to act, pretending that he had left Alraschid, whom he had put to death at Constantinople before the expedition sailed, sick on board his vessel. Four years afterwards Barbarossa was driven, after a gallant defence, from

his newly acquired possession by Charles V. who replaced Muley-Hassan upon the throne as his tributary, requiring from him six horses and as many hawks, as an annual token of his vassalage ; the emperor, moreover, retained the Goletta and all the fortified sea-ports. This state of affairs did not last long ; the Spanish garrisons were expelled by the Turks, and Tunis became a province of the Porte. In 1655, Admiral Blake, with an English fleet, memorable as the first that had entered the Mediterranean since the time of the Crusades, anchored in the bay and demanded the release of the English captives. The Turkish viceroy, in reply, insolently desired him to look at his castles of Porto Farino and the Goletta, and do his utmost. The admiral laid his vessels close in shore, destroyed the defences of the castles, landed his crews, burnt the Tunisian fleet, and released the English prisoners. Thirty years after this occurrence, the Tunisians, dissatisfied with the Turkish rulers they received from Algiers, revolted, elected a Bey from among themselves, and declared the sovereignty hereditary. The Porte not being then in a condition to maintain its

claims, tacitly acquiesed in this arrangement, since which time the Beys of Tunis, although nominally subject to the Sultan, have been virtually independant princes.

Tunis, with a population, as nearly as it can be estimated, of 120,000 inhabitants, stands close to the western edge of the lake, surrounded by a wall pierced with numerous outlets ; the suburbs on the northern side of the city are also enclosed by a wall of more recent construction, defended by occasional bastions in place of towers.

From the summit of a hill, a short distance to the northward of the city, to which the Europeans have given the name of the Belvedere, is a splendid panoramic view of Tunis and the surrounding country. The city, inclining towards the lake, lies on the slope of a range of heights, crowned by the Kasbah and various detached forts. A picturesque island, with the ruins of an abandoned fort, once used as a lazaretto, rises towards the centre of the lake, and the constant traffic between Tunis and the Goletta specks the surface of the latter with a fleet of boats. Beyond, on the narrow belt of land that separates the sea and lake, stand the forts

and dock-yard of the Goletta. Still farther out are the vessels, anchored in the roads ; and, broken only by the rocky form of the island of Zembra, the lovely bay of Tunis stretches seaward, as far as the eye can reach. The elevated promontory of Cape Bon forms the eastern side of the bay, and on the western one, are the ruins of Carthage, marked by the modern chapel of St. Louis, placed conspicuously on the site of its ancient citadel. To the westward of the city, at the foot of the fortified heights, is a valley, with an extensive salt lake, which, during the heats of summer, is almost dry ; near this is the Bardo, the residence of the Bey, a square mass of buildings, rising from the treeless plain, and between it and the city, an aqueduct that spans the valley, crosses the road at right angles. An amphitheatre of lofty mountains, with the twin peaks of the Boo-Kerneen, the wild fantastic crest of the Lead Mountain, the lofty summit of Zouwan, towering above all, completes the panorama.

After breakfast, on the 7th, we accompanied Sir Thomas Reade to the Bardo, to be presented to the Bey. Passing out by the

Marine gate we drove through the suburbs, and, keeping to the westward along the sandy valley between the city and the high ground, soon arrived at the Bardo, a distance of nearly two miles. Its external appearance is sombre and desolate, from the absence of even a bush in its vicinity. Defended by heavy towers at each angle and a ditch surrounding its walls, the palace of the Bey is also a fortress, and the chief deposit of his treasures. Near the entrance were picketed four lines of horses, the property of the Bey, and a number of others, with magnificent saddles of gold and silver embroidery on the richest velvet, chased stirrups, and bridles hung with bells and plates of silver, were being led about, whilst their riders were engaged within. Facing the south are the Bey's private apartments ; in front of them, on an open platform, are placed some brass guns on European field-carriages, and from a lofty flag-staff waves the blood-red standard with its star and crescent, now harmless, but the crimson folds of which once swept the sea, and carried ruin and desolation into the remotest corners of the Mediterranean. On entering the great gate we passed up a narrow street, lined with small shops, and the houses of

various domestics and inferior officers who reside in the Bardo. Turning to the left we crossed a square court, and, leaving the closely grated windows of the harem to our right, entered a second square, thronged with a crowd of soldiers, attendants, Moors, Arabs, Jews, guards, Mamelukes, police-officers with their prisoners, and litigants awaiting their turn to be summoned to the hall of justice, where the Bey sits daily to hear complaints and decide cases, both civil and criminal. We now proceeded through an arched passage, having on either side a recess where, with their arms hung up behind them, guards were seated smoking and conversing with their friends as they passed, and leading to an inner court, the centre of which is adorned by a fountain, whilst an arcade, supported on marble columns, runs round the square. On entering, the hall of justice is to the left, the Bey's apartments in front, and the offices of the secretary, treasurer, &c., to the right. After waiting some time, as several tedious cases were before the Bey, and every thing yields precedence to the administration of justice, we were informed he was ready to receive us.

Passing down a long gallery lined with a

guard armed and disciplined in the European style, and the walls of which were hung with weapons, we entered the reception chamber, a magnificent saloon splendidly decorated, at the upper end of which the Bey was seated, with his treasurer standing at his side. As we walked towards him, he rose, and advancing, shook hands cordially with Sir Thomas Reade and returned our salaams when we were presented, saying he was glad to see us at the Bardo, and hoped we should pass our time agreeably in the Regency. He then ordered chairs to be placed for us, and coffee was handed round in small cups of the finest Dresden China. The personal appearance of Ahmed, the reigning sovereign of Tunis, is prepossessing; he is rather below the middle size, and having a bright dark eye, well-formed features, and great power of expression in the lines about his mouth, his countenance becomes animated when he speaks, which he does with a slight hesitation. Although only in his thirty-seventh year, the jet-black of his beard and mustachios are slightly sprinkled with grey. He wore a dark green frock coat, double-breasted and buttoned tight, gold-em-

broidered epaulettes, scarlet trousers with a broad stripe of gold lace, and on his head was the universal “shasheah” of red woollen, with a blue silk tassel. On his breast hung two brilliant orders of a large size, composed of magnificent diamonds set in the form of a crescent and star, surrounded by a twining pattern of foliage ; on the front of his shasheah was fixed a still more brilliant ornament of the same description, and beside him lay a sabre in a plain scabbard.

The conversation was carried on in Arabic and Italian, with the assistance of Signor Raffo, the Bey’s secretary, and the chancellor of the British consulate. The Bey spoke of our intended journey through the Regency, mentioned several places that we ought to visit, and promised that every facility and possible accommodation should be afforded to us. The conversation now turned upon the affairs of Europe and the present condition of Africa, upon which topics he spoke with such just, clear-sighted views, as convinced me the report I had before heard of his being a man of talent, was correct. But what surprised me most was his knowledge of geography ; not the superficial

acquaintance that might easily be picked up even by a prince of a Mahometan state, whose learning is usually confined to the Koran and the works of commentators, but it was evident from his incidental remarks that he was well versed in the subject. As a proof, I may mention an observation that he made, although in itself of no consequence. Hearing that I had been in China with the army, he asked several questions, one of which was, had I been at Pekin? I replied in the negative, and added, that Nankin was the furthest point which the British army reached ; on which he instantly said, “Nankin, the ancient capital of the empire, deserted for Pekin,” &c., and made inquiries concerning its size, population, and present state, in a manner that showed he understood and took an interest in the subject. He is almost entirely self-taught; brought up in seclusion, and an object of jealousy until his twenty-sixth year, he employed his naturally strong mind in study and preparing himself for the station to which it was always probable he would be called. In a future chapter I shall enter more fully into the consideration of his character with refer-

ence to the measures he has already taken, and those he intends to carry into effect for the improvement of his dominions. Much pleased with the friendly reception of the Bey, and with his easy, unaffected deportment, we took our leave, his Highness again repeating, that we had only to mention those parts of Tunis we wished to visit, and that he would order every assistance to be given to us by the authorities.

We had proposed going over the apartments of the Bardo, and also visiting the country palace of the Manuba, now converted into cavalry barracks, but the day was so far advanced when our interview was over, that we returned to Tunis. The aqueduct that supplies the detached forts, and under which the road passes, is a work of considerable magnitude, erected by the Spaniards during their shortlived rule. It is now undergoing repair, having been suffered of late years to fall into partial decay.

Comparing together the interior of the two cities of Algiers and Tunis, the result is greatly in favour of the latter. The style of the domestic architecture and the general arrangement of the houses is the same in both;

but in Tunis the streets are much wider, many of them paved, the mosques are larger and handsomer, with occasionally a graceful minaret replacing the square towers of the Algerine capital, and the bazaars, or "sooks," as they are here called, are protected from the sun and rain by vaulted roofs of stone, or wooden sheds across the street.

During the morning the sooks are densely crowded, for in addition to the aristocracy of the bazaars, who occupy the dens on either side, smaller traders erect temporary stalls, and the space is filled with a throng of men, women, and children—buyers, sellers, and idlers. A boy driving a laden donkey, or a horseman forcing a passage through the crowd, shouting "balek, balek," at the top of his voice, to clear the way, creates a momentary commotion; but, with this exception, the people are remarkably orderly, and what is more, they are honest; robberies from the person, or from the open shops are almost unknown, notwithstanding the apparent facilities, and the absence of any sort of police. Inside the shops there is a much more tempting collection of merchandize than in those of Algiers. Silk shawls, scarfs,

and handkerchiefs, of rich and tastefully arranged patterns, of brilliant colours, interwoven with gold; bernous, haicks, and shawls, from the Jereed and the island of Gerbeh, of unrivalled texture and softness, some entirely of wool, and others with an admixture of silk; weapons of all kinds, showily ornamented with silver, coral, and ivory, but of a very inferior description; the "shasheahs," or red caps, for which Tunis is famous through the Turkish empire, and the ottos of rose, jasmine, and other essential oils which are prepared here, although very expensive, are of the best quality.

The most attractive shops are those of the saddlers; the sole remnant of the ancient splendour of the Tunisian court being the continued use of magnificently embroidered horse accoutrements. The saddle is a coarse wooden frame with a high pommel, and a cantle formed like the back of a chair, over which is placed a padded covering, decorated according to the means and taste of the owner. Those belonging to the officers of the Court, or to wealthy individuals, are very handsome, made of the richest velvet, of some dark colour, but little of the ground is

seen through the mass of gold and silver embroidery worked upon it; the breastplate, four fingers wide, is often covered with embossed plates of silver; the bridle, with square blinkers, is as splendidly embroidered as the saddle, and the massive stirrups are gilt or plated, as gold or silver predominates in the work. A handsome set of saddlery will cost about forty pounds or 1200 piastres, but 10,000 piastres have been given. These splendid coverings are only used on grand occasions, being replaced for a journey by others of leather, often prettily worked in coloured silks, while the former, folded up, are easily carried in the baggage, and a change can be made in a few minutes.

Great spirit is given to the sooks, by the itinerant salesmen who wander up and down through the crowd, selling a most miscellaneous collection of goods by a species of auction, bawling out the articles they have to dispose of, and mentioning the last price that has been offered by any of the lookers on—a most enticing method of sale, as things you do not want, and would never go into a shop to ask for, are thus brought under notice, and you are seduced into bidding because they

seem to be going for a trifle. One man we stopped, had in his hands a pair of antique burners for perfumes, a silk scarf over one arm, and a second-hand Turkish carpet under the other. When the sale is effected, they receive a small per-centage from their employer ; and among this class dishonesty is almost unknown, notwithstanding the many temptations thrown in their way to falsify the sale, or run off with the valuable property often entrusted to their care. More than once we saw a shabby ragged fellow walking about the streets, offering valuable jewellery for sale among the crowd, half a dozen chains around his neck, a ring on each finger, and his arms hung with bracelets, massive rings for the ankles, and various female ornaments ; any bystander was at liberty to handle and examine them, and the idea of theft seemed as far away from the minds of those who stood about him, as from that of the man himself, who pushed with his precious burden unconcernedly through the mob. Whatever crimes the Tunisian Moors may be addicted to, they are at least, free from that of stealing ; for although there are robberies sometimes com-

mitted, the instances are comparatively rare, and there is not a capital in Europe, with its magistracy, gendarmes and police, where property could be exposed for a single day without risk, as is done in Tunis every day in the year. It is hardly necessary to mention, that when speaking of theft, I do not include the acts of a lawless soldiery, or the depredations of the robber tribes, who plunder all weaker than themselves.

A pleasing trait in the disposition of all classes is a general love of flowers. In every street were basketfuls of fresh and deliciously sweet flowers, arranged with much taste; each little bouquet, composed of roses and orange blossoms tied upon a slip of wood, and sold for a “bourba*,” a small copper coin, the thirteenth part of a penny. An extensive trade is carried on by the distillers of the various ottos and perfumed waters,

* The coins of Tunis in circulation, are :

1 Piastre = 16 Karroobs.

1 Karroob = $6\frac{1}{2}$ Bourbas.

The exchange varies considerably; but at this time it was in favour of bills upon England, and we received thirty piastres for one pound sterling. There is also a gold coin called a maboop, worth $4\frac{1}{2}$ piastres; but there are very few in circulation, and all accounts are kept in piastres and karroobs.

and many proprietors in the vicinity of Tunis derive considerable profit from the sale of the produce of their flower gardens. The Bash-Mamelook, in the gardens round his country house, is said to have upwards of 10,000 rose trees, and his annual crop of roses is regularly sold, at the rate of so much per tree; the flower is gathered just as it becomes full blown, and the leaves carefully picked, so as to separate those that are withered or decayed. Large baskets of rose leaves are brought to market during the season, and find a ready sale.

Our great difficulty now was to procure horses, as of late years they have not only increased in price, but have become scarce, principally from the numbers that have been exported to Algeria and Malta. After considerable trouble, I succeeded in purchasing a handsome, strong-built little horse, for six hundred piastres; the other horses for our first expedition we hired, at the rate of two piastres per diem, and took the owner, a good-tempered, hard-working Maltese lad, of the name of Angelo, for our servant. He knew only a few words of execrable Italian, but his willingness to please made

up for his deficiencies, and he eventually accompanied us in our wanderings until we returned to Bôna. An excursion to Solyman and the eastern side of the Bay of Tunis was first on the list; and as wild boars are numerous in that quarter, we hoped to get a shot or two at them. Mr. Reade, the eldest son of Sir Thomas Reade, who speaks Arabic like a native, and is well acquainted with the country, kindly volunteered to accompany us to Solyman, although he had only just returned from a two-months' march into the Jereed with the annual camp.

The only means of collecting the revenue from the wild tribes of the remoter parts of the regency, and from the inhabitants of the Jereed, is by a strong force, which leaves Tunis early in every year, and levies the tax of a tenth of all produce, in its passage, affording an excellent opportunity for traversing in safety some of the southern districts, which are rather dangerous to enter with a small escort. The command of this force is given to a person of the highest distinction, who is called the "Bey of the Camp," and is generally a member of the reigning family, often, indeed, the next heir

to the throne, which is the case at present. The body of troops employed on these expeditions is considerable; the nucleus is formed by about 2500 men of the regular army, including mamelukes, hambas, &c., and as they advance, numerous detachments join from the surrounding country, until the camp swells into an army, of sometimes 10,000 men, by the time the frontiers are reached. As the greater portion of the tribute is paid in the produce of the country, extensive preparations are necessary to be made for its transport, by assembling great numbers of camels at certain fixed points, where they are taken up by the camp, which, on its homeward march, resembles an immense caravan. The tents are pitched in a certain order, with that of the Bey in the centre; guards are mounted, and sentries posted during the night. Strict discipline is maintained, and any irregularities committed on the line of march are promptly punished. The Bey of the Camp also acts as supreme judge in the districts through which he passes, and hears any complaints that may be brought against the Kaïds or other authorities, administering justice in public, in

the centre of the camp, and the poorest individual is listened to when he pleads his own cause, with as much attention as is paid to the rich man. The camp had left Tunis this year on the 3rd of February, and returned the 4th of April, and both Mr. Reade and an officer on leave from Malta, who had accompanied it, found the expedition a most interesting one. In the Jereed they had suffered for a few days from the violent extremes of temperature, suddenly changing from almost overpowering heat, to very cold winds, and on one occasion the cold was so excessive, that several hundred camels and many men died in the course of twenty-four hours, being constitutionally unable to endure the severity of the weather.

CHAPTER II.

Hamman el Enf—Lover's Vows—Arrive at Solyman—The Sheick's Disappointment—Boar Hunt—A Tunisian Sportsman—His Misadventure—Bees—The Mare and Foal—Rhades—Lake of Tunis—The Goletta—Carthage—Quail Shooting—Chapel of St. Louis—Bordj Jedeed—Cisterns of Carthage—Sir Thomas Reade's Excavations—Ruins—Abdalleeah—Sir T. Reade's Collection—Beautiful Intaglio—Second Visit to the Bardo—Signor Raffo—Dragomen—Supply of Water—The Consulate—Marine Gate.

ON the afternoon of the 8th, we left Tunis for Solyman, distant eighteen miles to the eastward, attended by a Mameluke and two hambas, sent from the Bardo. After skirting the lake for some distance, we passed near the village of Rhades; and then crossing the river Mileeana by a modern stone bridge, arrived at Hamman el Enf, a country residence of the Bey's, standing at the foot of the double-peaked mountain of Boo-kerneen, and close to the sea. The palace, a plain white-washed mass of build-

ing erected over a hot spring, was left to take care of itself after a most primitive fashion, for the gates were locked, and the keys in Tunis. We had intended taking a bath, but were unable to effect an entrance. The waters are slightly sulphurous, and the temperature is so high, that the first plunge is scarcely endurable ; they are said to be very efficacious in cases of paralysis, rheumatism, &c. ; and wonderful stories are related of the cures they have performed. The Bey frequently resides here, and his only child, a little girl of seven or eight years of age, had not long left the place, having been ordered to bathe by the doctors. Half a dozen small houses stand near the palace ; and at one of them, which was a café we remained, to allow our baggage-horse, which we had distanced, to come up.

While sipping our coffee, a labouring man entered, who had three or four scars on the calf of each leg, being the indelible traces of a singular method of proving the sincerity of a lover's passion for his mistress. Watching her movements, the enamoured youth finds some favourable opportunity of throwing himself in her way, and walking before

his lady love, with many a tender sigh and love-sick glance, he applies a red hot piastre to his leg, or inflicts some similar piece of torture upon himself ; implying, I suppose, that whilst happy in the presence of her he loves, mere pain of body is unfelt. At the present time, now that all are trying to reduce theory into practice, a test of sincerity somewhat in this style might perhaps be advantageously applied by my fair country-women ; for many an amorous swain, who, brimful of courage, would pour forth endless protestations of the heroic deeds he would perform, and the impossible sacrifices he was ready to make, would sneak off, a detected braggart, at the sight of a hot half-crown.

The sun was rapidly declining, and, having still nine miles before us, we resumed our march. Rounding the shoulder of the mountain, the road divides, the right-hand branch leading to Hammamet and the eastern coast of the Regency, and the one to the left, which we followed, leading through a succession of unenclosed corn-fields to Solyman, where we arrived at seven o'clock, and found everything prepared for our re-

ception in the house of the Sheick, a messenger having been sent in the morning from the Bardo ordering him to receive us. A coffee-maker was in attendance, whose sole business it was to keep perpetually bringing small cups of coffee until ordered to stop ; and supper was ready whenever we chose to order it. It consisted of the usual Moorish dishes—thick soup, with vermicelli, stewed meat and vegetables, dressed with a liberal allowance of oil, not of the best description, and couscousoo, more highly spiced and peppered than among the Arabs. There were also the sweet cakes, crusted with sugar, for which the Tunisian confectioners are celebrated ; and when the taste becomes accustomed to the otto of rose with which most of them are strongly flavoured, they are delicious.

The Sheick who had called to pay his respects to us, met with a sad disappointment ; for, although we offered him wine, he obtained no spirits, and he had come with the full intention of getting drunk as fast as he could. Too well bred to ask, he threw out hint after hint, to which we, or rather Mr. Reade, turned a deaf ear, for he had

given a great deal of trouble to the last shooting party that had visited Solyman, by getting so excessively drunk that he rolled on the floor, and had to be carried home like a sack, having finished two bottles of brandy and half a bottle of rum, in the course of a couple of hours. It is very seldom that an Arab is found who disregards the commands of the Koran, but it is equally rare to find a Moor who will not get drunk when opportunity offers: many are habitual drunkards, and the quantity of liquor they can swallow is enormous.

Next morning we were awakened an hour before day-break by the indefatigable coffee-maker, and as it became light, we were in our saddles, on our way to a river six miles distant, where we hoped to kill a boar as well as see the country. The plain of Solyman is rich and well cultivated, and the town is surrounded by fields and extensive olive plantations, enclosed with hedges of the prickly pear. A proprietor of an estate in the neighbourhood, Tunisian by birth, but whose parents being Genoese, is not considered as a subject of the Bey, joined us, and afforded considerable amusement,

by the wonderful accounts he gave of his own exploits as a sportsman. His ingenuity was extraordinary ; for, excepting his total contempt of numbers, he kept within the bounds of possibility, although seldom within those of probability.

Near the banks of the Oued Bzeach, we found a numerous party of country people, who were to act as beaters, and who had been taken from their work in the fields by the Sheicks of the neighbouring villages, each of whom were obliged to furnish their quota for the service. The Bzeach, flowing through the plain, is bordered with tangled thickets, and reeds ten or twelve feet high grow in its swampy bed, which is a favourite resort of the wild boars, as abundance of food is to be found in the fields near the river. Concealing ourselves in the reeds at the points commanding the open tracks, we tried beat after beat unsuccessfully. Fortune did not favour us, very few boars were seen ; and, at the end of the day, there was only one to take home, which was, however, a tolerable load for a horse.

Our sporting friend, the Genoese, was still more unfortunate ; after all his boasting,

he had killed nothing but his favourite dog, which he had fired at when among the reeds, mistaking him for a boar. He was much annoyed at first, but he soon became reconciled to his misfortune, when the idea struck him that he deserved great credit for having succeeded so well in such a difficult shot; and, lost in admiration of his own skill, he begged us to observe how satisfactory it was that the poor dog was quite dead, and how beautifully the ball was placed just behind the shoulder.

Next morning we agreed to try our fortune at the Oued Aweynah, another small stream nearer the high ground, but the results were still worse than those of the previous day, as we did not even see a boar. We were singularly unfortunate, as the sport had, hitherto, always been good in this quarter. The Arabs accounted for it by the recent changes of weather, and said that the boars were all in the mountains. We had, nevertheless, a ride over an extensive tract of country, and ascended the seaward face of one of the mountains of the range that forms the high land of Ras Addar, or Cape Bon.

On the slopes of the hills, and on the

plain, grow a profusion of wild flowers, and large patches of gorse, covered with golden blossoms, supply food to the bees kept in great numbers by the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages. The honey is delicious and is much used in cookery, and, in Tunis, the wax sells at a good price. The hives are cylinders of basket-work, laid horizontally in rows, with one end open, and often tier above tier ; in one village I counted upwards of forty, inserted into a sloping bank. Within a mile or two of Solyman I had the vexation of finding that my horse was lame, and next morning he was hardly able to move.

Before leaving Solyman, which we did early on the 11th, I walked through the town, of which more than half is in ruins, the only object of the slightest interest being a large stone bearing a few letters of a Roman inscription, which, the sheick said, was the only thing of the kind the place contained. Furnished with a horse, in place of my own, which had to be led to Tunis, we returned by the road that we came, as far as Hamman el Enf, where we turned off in the direction of the Goletta. One of the hambas who was riding a mare with a foal

at her foot, gave the little thing a lift, when it got tired, by taking it up before him ; it seemed quite accustomed to travel in this manner, and went fast asleep, with its head and tail dangling on either side of its mother, who took no more notice of it, than bending her neck and rubbing it with her nose when it was first put up ; this is a common custom, and, frequently afterwards, we saw the foals carried on horses and camels, the owners putting them down to walk when they were rested.

Having now got rid of the lame horse and the baggage, we cantered across the fields to the village of Rhades, famous as the spot where Regulus, in the first Punic war, gained an easy victory over Hanno, who had kept the Carthaginian army, the chief strength of which lay in elephants and cavalry, on the hills, where neither could act. Not long ago a pair of elephant's tusks, of large size, were dug up on the position supposed to have been occupied by Hanno, and, from the durable nature of ivory, they may, without any violent stretch of antiquarian credulity, be looked upon as relics of the battle.

From the heights near Rhades we de-

scended to the narrow strip of land that, extending northwards to Cape Carthage, separates the Lake of Tunis and the sea. Changed, like the coasts in its vicinity, the lake was once a deep and capacious harbour, for in 533, A.D., the fleet of Belisarius, consisting of six hundred vessels, many of five hundred tons burden, passed through the narrow channel of the Goletta, and anchored in safety on the day preceding his triumphal entry into Carthage. A thousand years elapsed, and it had become so shallow that the scanty remnant of Barbarossa's garrison, driven from the Goletta, retreated across it to Tunis ; and, until fourteen years ago, it remained little more than a morass with a few feet of water in its centre, when the sea, during a violent storm, broke through the bank, and, forming a second channel, increased the lake to its present size of thirty miles in circumference, with ten feet of water in its deepest part.

Galloping along the sandy spit, disturbing the repose of an immense flock of flamingoes, which were standing motionless in the shallow water, we arrived at the Goletta at noon. The fortifications on either side of the canal are of considerable strength ; for-

midable batteries have been built, level with the water, and armed with guns of various calibre, many of which are remarkably handsome, and several are trophies of those days when the cruisers of Tunis were the terror of Christendom. A huge brass gun, a fine specimen of ornamental casting, was a present from the Jews of Tunis to their ruler. In the dockyard there is a large frigate on the stocks, but there seemed to be but little attention paid to the navy. Most of the work done is performed by convicts, who have been sentenced to various periods of hard labour. Owing to the muddy nature of the waters of the lake, the narrow channel would soon be choked with the accumulated deposit, were it not for the work of a steam-dredging machine of English manufacture.

The four miles of the peninsula, north of the Goletta, were soon passed over, and we stood on the site of Carthage. To whose mind does not the name of Carthage bring a thousand stirring memories of the past? What dim visions arise of her early age, each harsh, barbaric feature seen through the veil of time, and softened by the graceful hand of historic fiction! Who can recal the days

of her power and splendour, when her ships were laden with the commerce of the world, and her fleets and armies disputed its empire with the rival might of Rome, and then stand unmoved upon the spot where the waving corn conceals the few miserable fragments that remain of all her ancient grandeur ?

Nothing can be more complete than the ruin of Carthage ; the natural course of time, and the passions of man have united in the work of destruction. The coast is so changed, that the sea flows over the shattered columns and foundations of the splendid edifices that lined the shore, and the very position of the double harbour and the island of the Cothon is a subject of dispute. From the promontory of Cape Carthage, or Ras Sidi Boosaeed, to near the Lake of Tunis, the heights facing the sea are covered with loose stones, fragments of masonry, and of precious marbles. All that is left besides, are some shapeless masses near the sea, of enormous thickness, entirely composed of small stones and mortar ; the soil, a confused collection of rubbish, is noted for its fertility, and luxuriant crops of wheat and barley covered its surface, hiding the

numerous wells and cisterns, that, scattered here and there, render necessary great care in riding among the ruins.

During the quail season Carthage is the best shooting ground in the neighbourhood, and we could scarcely ride ten yards without flushing a bird. Several parties were out shooting, from the vessels in the harbour, and from the different consulates, but, notwithstanding the ground having been shot over, Mr. Crowe, the British consul at Sfax, who had come out from Tunis to meet us, had killed twenty couple of birds as he came across from the Abdalleah, Sir Thomas Reade's country house ; and as we wandered about the ruins, we made the bag up to sixty-seven and a half couple. A ride of nine miles along the western side of the lake brought us to Tunis a little after seven o'clock.

Having taken only a casual view of the ruins, we devoted the following day to a closer inspection. The only site that can be ascertained with any degree of certainty, is that of the "byrsa," or citadel, which stood on a hill in the centre of the city ; its summit is now occupied by the chapel lately erected to the memory of St. Louis.

Built on the highest point of the hill, in the form of a cross, surmounted by a dome, and facing the south-east, it is a conspicuous object from the surrounding country, and from it the best view of the ruins is obtained. The Bey gave permission to erect it, and over the entrance is the following inscription :

“ LOUIS PHILIPPE, PREMIER ROI DES FRANÇOIS
A ERIGÉ CE MONUMENT
EN L'AN 1841
SUR LA PLACE OU EXPIRA LE ROI SAINT LOUIS SON AÎEUL.”

Within the chapel is a fine statue of the royal saint, by a modern French artist. Very large cisterns have been constructed under the building occupied by the person in charge, a considerable space around has been inclosed by an octangular wall, and is laid out as a garden and planted with trees. A road has been cut to the water's edge, and it is certainly a singular coincidence that, from the manner in which the buildings have been laid out, a couple of guns landed from a man-of-war, run up the winding road, and mounted upon the solid platform of masonry on which the chapel stands, would, with a few loopholes broken in the outer

wall, form a tolerably strong fort at a few hours' notice. In excavating the foundations, and forming the road, numerous fragments of columns, statues, bas-reliefs, and portions of inscriptions, with broken capitals, friezes, &c., were discovered, but nothing of any importance ; whatever has been found is carefully preserved, and the finer specimens are inserted in the wall of one of the buildings, under an arcade.

On a hill near the sea, a mile to the north-east of the byrsa, is the small fort of Burdj Jedeed, the burial-place of Saint Louis. On the slope of this height are the Lesser Cisterns, the only remains of Carthage sufficiently well preserved to be of interest for themselves alone. Supplied solely by rain-water, they consisted of eighteen reservoirs, placed side by side, in the form of an oblong square ; each cistern is ninety-three feet in length, twenty in breadth, and seventeen in depth, and they could have contained upwards of 14,000 tons of water ; those at the northern end are nearly perfect. A passage runs round the whole, and a walk up the centre is formed by a wall level with the top of the cisterns, crossing each at right angles, and probably

placed to guard against the lateral pressure of the water, if one cistern should be full whilst its neighbours were empty. They are arched over, and at each angle of the southern end, are the remains of a small circular building ; the dome of one is still in a tolerable state of preservation. Similar to most of the ruins, the material used in their construction, is a concrete of small stones imbedded in mortar of an extraordinary degree of hardness, and the cement with which the basins are lined is of an equally durable nature. On the height, and under the wretched hovels of the village of Malakah, are those known by the name of the Greater Cisterns, which were supplied with water from Zouwan, a distance of fifty miles, by means of an aqueduct, one of the colossal works of ancient days. Being in a much more ruinous state than the others, some of them are used as stabling for their cattle by the inhabitants of the village.

Close to the shore under the Burdj Jedeed are the remains of several immense buildings, if we may judge from the size of the huge masses that are still visible. For more than three years Sir Thomas Reade was employed

excavating at the spot, and he succeeded in clearing away the earth and rubbish that covered the floor of what must have been an edifice of great magnificence, adorned with granite and marble columns, the pavement of Mosaic ; and from the profusion of slabs of the most rare and precious marbles that were found, the interior was probably encrusted with them. A mutilated statue of Jupiter was dug out of the ruins, along with a variety of minor articles ; but no inscriptions were discovered, to denote whether it had been a temple, a palace, or a Christian church. The walls, of great thickness, are of concrete, faced with hewn stones ; and whatever was the nature of the building, it must have been of imposing dimensions.

Traces of a theatre, circus, temples, and other large buildings, together with the position of the harbours, are just sufficiently marked to allow of their being identified. The noble quays that ran along the sea-shore, are under water, and on a calm day ruins are to be discovered at the bottom of the sea, extending for some distance from the land. The eventful history of Carthage is too well known to need recapitulation, and

relative to its present condition I will only mention, that although destroyed by the Saracens A. D. 698, it was not until after the death of St. Louis, and the departure in 1270 of the French crusading army, which had taken up a strong position amid the ruins, at that period considerable, that to prevent such an occurrence for the future, all that was left of Carthage was razed to the ground.

Near the little village of the Marsa, a mile and a half from the ruins, is the Abdalleah, a large handsome building, once a country palace of the Bey's, and which has been occupied by Sir Thomas Reade for many years. In the poultry-yard was a young ostrich stalking about, a giant among the pygmies, and in an adjoining paddock were some deer from the interior. To the Zoological Society of London Sir Thomas Reade has been a most generous contributor, and many specimens of rare and valuable animals have been sent off to England from the Abdalleah. Around the Marsa are numerous country-houses of wealthy Tunisians, and the villas of the European residents, surrounded with gardens and plantations of olive, almond,

and fig-trees, make it the most delightful spot for a summer residence in the neighbourhood of Tunis.

During his lengthened residence in the Regency, Sir Thomas Reade has been indefatigably employed in forming a collection of Punic and Roman antiquities, and as he has spared neither expense nor labour, he has been eminently successful, especially with the former, which are very rarely to be met with; memorials of the long continued dominion of the Romans are found in every corner of the land, but few vestiges of the earlier possessors of the soil have endured to the present time. Unfortunately for us nearly the whole of his invaluable collection had been sent to England, which deprived us of the pleasure of inspecting it while occupied in exploring the country which it illustrates ; however, several gems, coins, and other small objects of great interest still remained ; and as a *souvenir* of our visit to Carthage, he gave each of us an engraved cornelian that had been found among the ruins.

One of the most exquisite productions of ancient art still remains in Tunis ; it is an intaglio bearing the figure of Neptune on his

car, cut in an oval cornelian of pale red, clouded with white. Upon the surface of a stone, not three quarters of an inch in diameter, is seen the noble figure of the god curbing his impetuous steeds, which rushing over the curling waves emulate them in the wild freedom of their movements ; the calm dignity of the god, the buoyant forms of the Tritons around the car, the distended nostrils, tossing manes, and swelling muscles of the horses, and the agitated sea, moved by the presence of its ruler, are all so admirably executed, and with such minuteness, that the closest examination with a powerful magnifier, only develops new beauties in this exquisite masterpiece of ancient art. It is not in the manual dexterity shewn in the execution that its beauty lies, but in the pure spirit of artistic genius that pervades the whole. Purchased by the late Signor Perrasso several years ago from a camel driver, for twelve piastres, he refused 15,000 piastres (500*l.*), and was said to value it at twice that sum. It is now the property of the sons of the original purchaser, who are anxious to part with it ; but at the preposterous value they place upon it, they will not do so

readily, which is to be regretted, as a gem like this should not lie hid in Tunis, being there nearly as much concealed as if it still remained among the ruins where it lay for centuries.

Preparatory to our departure for the interior, we paid a second visit to the Bardo, to mention the route we wished to take, and to ascertain if the Bey would issue orders for our admittance into the holy city of Kairouan. His highness was at first unwilling that we should venture into Kairouan, fearing that some misfortune might befall us occasioned by the fanatic inhabitants of one of the most bigoted cities of the Mahometan world, who consider the presence of a Christian or a Jew within their sacred walls as a pollution. On the point being pressed, he yielded, and the frank and graceful manner in which he granted our request, much enhanced the value of the permission.

To Signor Raffo, the Bey's secretary, we paid a visit in his office. By descent an Italian, he was born in Tunis, and his talents have raised him, although a Christian, to one of the highest and most confidential posts in the Regency, which he has held

under three successive Beys. This appointment of a Christian to an important civil situation, shews the freedom from religious prejudice that characterises the Tunisian court.

In walking about the city, it is usual for the Consuls and other Europeans to be accompanied by a dragoman attached to their consulate, who, with a sword by his side, a magnificent swagger in his gait, and a big stick, clears the way with little ceremony. In the suburbs and outskirts, it is as well to have a dragoman with you, but in the city, we usually dispensed with his attendance ; and, we never met with the slightest insult.

The streets are tolerably clean, in dry weather, for a Moorish town ; but after rain, they are knee deep in mud. Excepting the suburbs, the quarter principally occupied by the European population is the dirtiest in the city. What renders the former so detestable is an open ditch that runs through it, in which stagnates the filth of Tunis ; and as the ground between the city and the lake is nearly of the same level

as the latter, there is not a sufficient fall to carry it off speedily. The supply of fresh water is very deficient, as all the springs are brackish, and the city depends entirely for that used for culinary purposes and drinking, upon rain water collected in tanks. If proper surveys were made, I have little doubt but that good water would be found on the range of heights to the northward of the city.

The British consulate, where we were residing, has only lately been finished, and is a large, well-arranged house, containing handsome apartments. Built close to the Marine gate, fronting a small open space, the scene from the balcony affords constant amusement. From morning to night, the passing crowd never ceases ; cantering in from the Bardo, some officer of the Court will enter, his gaily-caparisoned horse made to prance and curvet, whilst the rider, clad in European frock-coat and trousers, shasheah with flowing tassel of extra size, thin shoes and white cotton stockings, looks around for admiration, and dashes forward, scattering a lot of dirty Jews in black garments, as they stand wrangling in the road. Next, on his way to visit his coun-

try house, comes an oily, well-fed Moor, in snowy haick and turban, mounted on an ambling mule ; as he reaches the gate, loud cries of "balek, balek," cause a vigorous tug at the mule's head, and he turns aside from the narrow arch of the gateway to let a string of camels enter—ungainly-looking animals, most of them daubed over with a mixture of tar and grease, to cure a sort of mange with which they are affected. On foot a continued stream of passers-by is flowing through the gate, consisting of Moors, Turks, Bedoueens from the interior, country people from the villages, soldiers, porters, and negroes ; near at hand is seated a money-changer, with his pile of piastres, and trays of small copper coins, ready counted ; fruit stalls and small shops are driving a prosperous trade ; a Maltese mounted on a horse without a saddle, is riding up and down, showing him off for sale, and a number of his countrymen stand idling about ; a water carrier is attracting attention by jingling together two metal cups, dogs and children abound, a negro is lying asleep under the wall, and close to him is a group of camels, their humps covered with inverted rush

baskets, kneeling around a tray heaped with bran, feeding with the utmost decorum, and gravely inclining their long necks for each mouthful. Such, with some slight variations, is the daily scene within the Marine gate of Tunis.

CHAPTER III.

Departure from Tunis—"Amers" of the Bey—Our escort—Djebel Mukhtar—Grumbalia—Olives—El Arbain—Probable scene of Masinissa's escape—Ruins—A disputed point—Ksar el Menarah—Sebkah el Jereeba—History of Baba Jebb—Ancient custom—Arab miles—Hergla—Antiquities—Numidian cranes—Gardens—Pottery of Gerbah—Arrival at Susa.

AT eight o'clock on the morning of the 15th of April, we left Tunis for the interior. With considerable difficulty, we had succeeded in procuring horses; Lord Feilding had purchased, almost at the last moment, a handsome chesnut Arab, but I was obliged to ride a hired one, as my own horse still continued lame, and we engaged two more for our baggage. From the Bardo we were furnished with orders under the Bey's own seal, called "amers," addressed to the au-

thorities of the districts we were going to visit, enjoining them not only to facilitate our movements and protect us, but also to supply food, lodging, and forage for the whole party, at the Bey's expense, we being considered as his guests during our travels in the Regency. As a specimen, I annex the translation of an "amer," taken at random from amongst those granted to us on this occasion :

"Praise be to God !

"Our present order we put into the hands of our beloved Shawsh, whom we have appointed with a mameluke and two hambas*, to accompany two English officers who came to visit our country, and expressed a wish to see Susa, Monasteer, Sfax, and the neighbourhood of Kairouan.

"Our beloved authorities, therefore, who shall see the present, are ordered to treat them generously during their visits, by

* Hambas are inferior officers attached to the Court; a certain number are always on guard at the Bardo, and they perform a variety of duties connected with the police, making arrests, &c. The Bash (chief) Hamba is one of the most important officials in the regency. A Shawsh is an officer of a superior grade usually sent in the command of a party.

assisting them in every thing they may want, and paying attention to them in whatever may be required by a liberal hospitality towards them.

“ We salute you !

“ Written by the poor towards God, His servant Ahmed Basha Bey. May God second his wishes. Amen ! the 7th Rabih 2nd, 1261.”

Our party, including ourselves, was eight in number, with as many horses. The appearance of the Shawsh, Sidi Abdallah, who had been specially chosen by the Bey to attend us, was imposing. He was of a noble figure, mounted on a superb white horse (from the stables of the Bardo) of nearly pure Arab blood, and dressed in the Moorish costume, his embroidered jacket being concealed under the voluminous folds of two white berous, the hood of the under and finer one bound round his head with the usual camel’s hair cord ; his feet and legs were encased in red boots armed with spurs, long iron spikes nearly six inches in length, and his gun and scimitar were richly ornamented with silver. To this nothing could have formed a stronger contrast than the

appearance of Baba Jebb, the old Mameluke, who, speaking very indifferent Italian, acted as interpreter. Imagine a little, thin, old man, attired in a blue cloth jacket, trousers of the same material, loose to the knee, tight from thence to below the calf and there fastened with strings, bare ankles not over clean, and slippers down at heel; round his waist a party-coloured sash, supporting a cartouch-box and sabre, a single-barrelled European gun, manufactured in the days of old, slung over his right shoulder; on his left a dark-coloured berinous, and a faded shasheah crowning the whole; add moustaches and a flowing gray beard, and place him in an antique saddle, on the back of a miserable, half-starved, three-year-old mare, thirteen hands and a half high, with lob-ears, hogged mane and shaved tail, and having an amulet, to guard against the evil eye, sewn up in a little bag hung round her neck, and you have a tolerable portrait of Baba Jebb, whose fun and drollery afforded us many an hour's amusement. The two hambas, well armed and mounted, seemed serviceable troopers, and the number of our party was completed by Angelo and an Arab lad, who, mounted on

the two pack-horses, were sitting on the sembeels, large straw panniers that contained the baggage.

When clear of the city we followed the road to Solyman, as far as Hamman l'Enf, just beyond which it divides. Taking the branch to the right, we skirted the base of the Djebel Mukhtar, where, in the limestone rock, are several caves and quarries, in one of which Virgil causes Dido and *Æneas* to take shelter during a storm.* Proceeding in a south-easterly direction, the plain of Solyman, rich in corn and oil, was on our left; and at two P.M. we rode into the court-yard of Grumbalia, a large country-house, the property of the Bey, situated in the midst of extensive plantations of olive, and twenty-four miles distant from Tunis. A few cottages and a ruinous mosque, of small size, stand at the rear of the house, which is inhabited only by a Mameluke, placed there in charge of the olive gardens, from which the Bey

* Sir Grenville Temple, in a most interesting chapter, satisfactorily proves that the African scenery of the *Æneid* is not imaginary, but that Virgil must have written from truthful descriptions of the general features of the country. *Vide* "Excursions in the Mediterranean," by Sir Grenville Temple, vol. ii. chap. ii.

derives a considerable income. In his anxiety to do us honour, he was seized with an extraordinary fit of cleanliness, and notwithstanding all we could say, he obliged his negro servant to continue sweeping until he fairly drove us out of the room, by raising a cloud of dust that had lain for years undisturbed upon the plastered floor.

The olives in this neighbourhood are remarkably fine; they are preserved in oil instead of a pickle of salt and water; the fruit is placed in earthen jars, which are then filled up with oil, and the mouths stopped with clay; thus treated, it remains fit for use only about eighteen months. If the olives are ripe, when gathered, they acquire a sharp acid flavour, but those that fall prematurely from the trees become black and shrivelled.

Next morning we were up and “en route” soon after five o’clock; thermometer at forty-nine degrees. The road, after leaving the olive gardens of Grumbalia, lies across an open, undulating plain, the neck of the peninsula of Cape Bon. In an hour and a half we arrived at the deserted village of “El Ar-bain,” or “The Forty,” so called from a

tradition current among the people, to the effect that many hundred years ago a battle was fought at this spot between a large army, and a band of heroes, who were called “Mudgerdeen” (fighters for their faith), in which the latter, to the number of forty, were killed, their graves being still pointed out under a clump of palms in the vicinity. This may be the place where Masinissa, with a small body of fifty men, flying from the victorious forces of Syphax, was overtaken by Boccar in the plain, all his followers, except four who escaped with him, being killed. The localities, and the traditional number of slain, nearly agree with the account of Masinissa’s escape, given by Livy; and it is probable, from the subsequently glorious career of the African monarch, that the spot where he escaped from his pursuers, and where his devoted followers fell, would be distinguished by a name that should exist after its exact origin had been long forgotten. The name “fighters for their faith,” given to those who fell, throws little or no light upon the subject, as nearly all the local traditions have been appropriated by the Mahometans, and connected

with their religion ; and it is not likely that two events, so similar in their details, and of sufficient importance to become traditional, should have taken place in the same district.

Around, lay the traces of an ancient city, whose name has perished ; the modern village was in ruins, and no living creature was to be seen, save an owl, which sat on the wall of a deserted cottage, gazing stupidly around, dazzled by the increasing glare of the sun ; on the sound of our voices breaking the silence of the plain, the solitary bird flitted noiselessly away, like the spirit of desolation fleeing at the approach of man.

For the next mile, on both sides of the road, hewn stones are scattered about, and foundations appear in every direction ; to the right are the remains of a considerable building, and the road passes over the arched roof of a small cistern. A little to the left is the floor of a house, of peculiar construction, composed of pieces of tile, two inches square, placed edgewise, three together, each set at right angles to the other, and imbedded in mortar, the whole having the appearance of basket-work mosaic.

On leaving the plateau, we descended to-

wards the sea, and the town of Hammamet, the ancient Siagitana, standing on the shore of the bay to which it gives its name, appeared in view. The broken ground of the declivity is covered with dwarf shrubs, and, half way down, the road branches off to the right and left ; here arose a difference of opinion, our escort wishing to take the latter, which led to Hammamet, a town where there was nothing to recompense us for going out of our way, and we insisting on following the former, to Hergla. It was a matter of no great importance in itself, but if we had given in we should never have regained the mastery ; a trial of strength was necessary to make affairs work smoothly for the future, and we were rather glad that the opportunity had offered at such an early period. Every argument was urged against us ; it was too far, the horses would be tired, and if we did arrive it would not be until the middle of the night, &c. ; and Baba Jebb added, as a climax to the whole, that the sheick of Hammamet would give us a dinner fit for the Bey, whilst at Hergla they were so poor that we should get nothing to eat. This argument he thought conclusive, and was turning his mare's head in the direction of the wished-

for dinner, when, as the only way to settle the point, we rode off towards Hergla, telling them to please themselves ; this had the desired effect, and, shrugging their shoulders, they followed without another word ; and so ended our first and last dispute.

After halting for an hour at an unfinished fondook, near the sea, we proceeded, along the coast, to the ruins of a Roman mausoleum, to which the Arabs have given the name of "Ksar el Menarah," or, the tower of the light-house. From a square base rises a circular tower, forty-five feet in diameter and thirty in height, built of small stones and mortar, and faced with blocks of coarse sand-stone, full of shells ; it is much defaced, except on the north-western side, and the altars, with inscriptions, mentioned by Shaw as in his time standing on its summit, have long since disappeared. Hammamet bears east by north about eight miles, and the tower now stands three quarters of a mile from the sea, although, from the appearance of the coast, it would seem that the mausoleum, at the period of its erection, stood on the shore, and that the sea has receded considerably.

A little farther on is "Bir Saloom," the

well of the steps, and around it are the foundations of a town. Passing these, we crossed a small river, by a modern bridge, the ruins of the ancient one, consisting of sixteen arches, standing just above it ; and, at two o'clock, we entered upon the narrow tongue of land lying between the sea and the extensive salt lake, or "Sebkah el Jereeba," now nearly dry, but during winter, or when, after a gale of wind, the waters of the Mediterranean enter, forming a shallow sheet of water, twenty miles in length, communicating with the sea by three channels. To the westward, the plain is bounded by a range of mountains, amongst which rises conspicuously the lofty summit of Zouwan ; whilst a chain of heights, sweeping round towards the sea, with a village picturesquely placed on the top of a singularly scarped hill, forms the northern boundary of the great plain of Kairouan. At three o'clock we passed one of the channels between the sebkah and the sea, near which are the ruins of a bridge that crossed a channel now filled up. The margin of the lake, and the sea-shore, were strewn with sea-weed, the size, shape, and colour, of potatoes. On the dry bed of the lake stood a gazelle, which had come from the plain to lick the salt crystal-

lized on its surface ; as we drew near, the graceful creature, gazing timidly around, sprang off towards the other side of the sebkah, which appears to be a favourite resort of these beautiful animals, the soft mud being marked with their slot in many places.

During the afternoon Baba Jebb related the history of his life. Born at Naples, he had accompanied his father, when nine years of age, in a voyage to Trieste. Whilst on the passage, the vessel was taken by a Tunisian corsair, and the passengers and crew sold for slaves ; Baba Jebb was purchased by the Bey, but who bought his father he never knew, and he has forgotten his own name. Brought up in the Bardo, as a Mahometan, he became, in time, a Mameluke of the Skeefa, (entrance of the palace), and has been upwards of fifty years in the Regency. He has entirely lost all European ideas, is a very indifferent Mahometan, and thinks that the laws of the Koran against wine are just as absurd as those of the Christians against a plurality of wives ; as to what will become of him when he dies, he does not know, but takes it for granted that there will be room for him somewhere.

For the few miles previously to reaching

Hergla, we rode along the sea-shore. The evening was calm and clear. Looking back, the wide sweep of the bay was visible as far as Ras el Mahmour ; the white-washed walls and Kasbah of Hammamet, formed a bright speck in the distance ; and, beyond, rose the elevated mountains of Cape Bon ; on our right was the muddy bed of the Sebkah, which an intervening ridge of sand had concealed for some miles ; to our left was the sea, the scarcely moving waves just murmuring on the sandy beach ; and before us were the tower and village of Hergla, placed on the point of a low range of heights, running out a short distance from the shore.

As we rode up the path we were stopped, at the entrance of the village, by two young men, in their gala-dresses of brown cloth, trimmed with yellow lace, who, stationing themselves on either side of the road, advanced and took us prisoners, by casting a handkerchief gently across our horses' necks ; according to ancient custom, we had to ransom ourselves by the payment of a few piastres, as a wedding was being celebrated in the village, and each stranger who enters is expected to make a small present, the

collection of which is intrusted to the young men, friends of the bridegroom.

On our arrival, a stormy discussion arose ; the people declared that the Sheick was absent, and that they were too poor to give us anything when the only man of property in the village was out of the way ; the fact was that the Sheick had run off and hid himself to avoid having anything to do with us. We left our people to fight it out, and the affair could not have been in better hands than those of Baba Jebb, whose tongue poured forth a perfect torrent of abuse, until we were installed in a small room in the best of the wretched hovels of the village.

The distance we had come, from Grumbalia, may be estimated at fifty miles, for we had been thirteen hours on the road, including the half-hour at the fondook. It was said to be sixty-five Arab miles, but they are so uncertain in length that it is almost impossible to reckon by them ; we usually counted our distances by the number of hours we had travelled, making due allowance for halts and diversions from the road. An Arab mile is considered as the distance at which, on level ground, a man may be

distinguished from a woman; throughout Algeria and Tunis the mile so called may be roughly estimated at a little more than two-thirds of an English one.

We had time, before dark, to walk through the village, a collection of miserable houses, clustered round a square tower of Saracenic or Moorish construction, built on the site of the ancient Horrea Cœlia, and formed of its ruins. Fragments of pillars, carved mouldings, and the mutilated remains of two bas-reliefs in white marble, are mingled with the squared stones, of Roman workmanship, that have been employed in building the castle and the present village of Hergla. In the court-yard of our house was a cavern, which they said extended to a considerable distance, in the direction of the tower; but as it was inhabited, and full of women and children, we could not explore it. We had purchased two or three trifling articles of ancient pottery, and some copper coins of no rarity, when, with a certain degree of mystery, as though the contents were of value, a small packet of dirty rag, carefully tied up, was offered for sale; on opening it there appeared, in place of a gold coin or an engraved gem, nothing

but a child's marble, striped with blue and yellow.

Eight o'clock arrived and there were no symptoms of supper ; another hour passed away, and our people looked reproachfully at us ; old Baba Jebb was ravenously hungry, and the only consolation he received was the assurance of the master of the house that the best the village afforded was preparing. At last it made its appearance, and when the solitary dish was placed before us, Baba Jebb remarked, in a sorrowful tone, " What a dinner we should have had at Hammamet." The food was certainly not inviting : a large earthenware bowl had been filled with boiling rancid oil, and floating in the midst was an untrussed fowl, with legs and wings extended. Its flesh was like leather, and the flavour imparted to it by being boiled in bad oil, was detestable. A dish of very dirty couscousoo, and two or three small cakes of coarse rye bread, completed our entertainment ; the latter particularly annoyed Baba Jebb, who exclaimed it was treating us worse than the horses, for they had barley, while we were fed upon rye. The poor people had given us the best they had, and all his

grumbling and abuse could not make it better. At one end of the narrow room was the usual stone platform, raised a couple of feet from the floor and covered with a mat, which does duty for a bedstead ; upon this we slept, and our escort and servants occupied the floor.

On the morning of the 17th, we started for Susa, a distance of eighteen miles. The road lies near the sea, and half-way there are the ruins of what probably was a fortified station on the coast ; it is known by the name of "the barber's shop." We had seen a similar ruin the previous day, a few miles on the other side of Hergla, but it had not been so well preserved. During the morning, we had an opportunity of watching a pair of those beautiful birds the Numidian cranes, or "Mademoiselles." In the spring, when they are paying their addresses to each other, their proceedings are very curious : they are seen to place themselves face to face, a little distance apart, one commences bowing, and is imitated by the other ; a regular minuet is then danced, each bird, with drooping wings, and a graceful movement of the head and neck, advances, retires, and

moves in a circle, with an easy gliding step, sometimes passing dos-a-dos ; the whole performance is gone through as methodically as by young ladies at school ; and from this, and their pretty little airs of conceit, I presume their name has been derived.

For some miles before reaching Susa, the country is cultivated, and the road bordered with gardens and luxuriant groves of olives, vines, and other fruit-trees, fenced round with hedges of the prickly pear ; in many of them are erected square towers, which the owners inhabit occasionally in the heats of summer, and which also serve as a residence to the servant who guards the property when the fruit has ripened. Palms are numerous, but they are principally planted for ornament, as the dates do not ripen well, and very little attention is paid to the cultivation of the trees. The gardens near the shore owe a portion of their fertility to an immense bank, formed by the sand drifted by the winds and waves, which extends for considerable distance along the coast, and shelters them towards the north and east. It has of late years increased rapidly, and has encroached to such a degree that several

of the towers have been overwhelmed, and many others seem likely to share their fate.

A long string of camels that we met, presented a singular appearance : laden with pottery from the island of Gerbah, huge sembeels piled high above the hump, with lamps, bowls, dishes, &c., and numerous water-jars of the classic forms of the ancient Etruscan vases, formed of porous earthenware, in which even in the hottest weather water is kept cool by evaporation. The greater part of the Regency is supplied from this island, and the enormous jars in which the oil is preserved and exported, are all made at Gerbah. The camel-drivers were well armed, and two of them wore long straight cross-hilted swords in rough wooden scabbards.

Emerging from the broad green belt of the plantations that encircle the town, we came in view of the whitewashed battlements of Susa close at hand, and at eleven o'clock, we entered by the marine gate, at the north-eastern angle of the town.

CHAPTER IV.

Susa—Ruins of Adrumetum—Tunisian Infantry—Ancient and modern harbours—Export trade—Soap manufactory—Oil mill—The camel's revenge—Administration of justice—Prisoners—The Kaïd's seal, and the forgery—The “Saheb-el-taba”—Date palm—Monasteer—Mahometan sabbath—Tunny fishery—Lambtah—Incaltah—Cultivation of the olive—Longevity of the olive—Ruins of Thapsus—Arrival at Mahadeah.

THE Vice-kaïd, in the absence of his superior, who was at Tunis, received us, and whilst we were at breakfast with him, Mr. Carleton, the British consular agent, hearing of the arrival of two English travellers, did not wait for a letter of introduction to be delivered, but most hospitably insisted on our removing at once to his house. The afternoon was spent under the guidance of Mr. W. Carleton in visiting the town and its environs.

Susa, a place of considerable trade, with a population of ten thousand inhabitants, occupies the site of the ancient Adrumetum, a city whose name frequently occurs in the history of Africa during the periods of the Carthaginian and Roman ascendancy. It was celebrated for the fertility of the surrounding country, one of the richest districts in a province to which was given the name of the granary of Rome. The town, nearly square, is enclosed by lofty battlemented walls, flanked with towers, on which are mounted a few light guns ; the kasbah stands on a height in the southwest angle, and the seaward face is further defended by batteries that command the harbour. There are only two gates, the one by which we entered, near the sea, and the other on the western side, leading into the interior. The fortifications are kept in tolerable repair, and walls, towers, and houses are alike covered with a frequently renewed coat of dazzling whitewash. In the streets and sooks there are no peculiarities worthy of remark, excepting the many fragments of antique columns, built into the walls of houses, and generally seen forming the corner stones where streets intersect each

other. Outside the western gate are the ruins of several cisterns, and two of those in the best state of preservation have been lately repaired and converted into government storehouses. A few hundred yards beyond, in the midst of an olive plantation, some huge fragments of masonry are still standing, of such gigantic proportions, as to defy all conjecture as to the description of building of which they once formed a part.

On the open space between these ruins and the walls three regiments of regular infantry were encamped, organized and drilled principally by French officers, many of whom still remain in the Tunisian service. Their arms, appointments, and clothing are all after the European model, with the exception of the shasheah, which replaces the shako. On parade these regiments look well, and manœuvre very fairly, indeed much better than could be expected when we consider how completely the European system of drill is opposed to their national habits of warfare. Individually the men have a mean, unsoldier-like appearance, with an awkward slouching gait, which may in great part be accounted for by the entire change of dress—from the

freedom of their rags (for they are taken from the lowest class of the population) to the confinement of trousers and tight fitting jackets. Except when stationed at or in the vicinity of Tunis, where they are under the eye of the Bey, their conduct is lawless and insubordinate, and the troops are the terror of the district where they may happen to be quartered. This is owing in a great measure to the miserable pay which they receive, and to the scandalous peculations of the officers, who cheat their men and the government, by issuing rations of the worst description; so that it not unfrequently happens the soldiery are driven by actual hunger to commit depredations upon the country people. How these troops will behave in the field remains to be proved, as there has not yet been any opportunity of testing them; but there is no want of courage individually, and they are full of confidence in themselves. When war was expected between Tunis and Sardinia, and the northern coast of the Regency was placed in a state of defence, they were both ready and willing to meet the Sardinian troops on equal terms. The arrangements of the present camp were very creditable, the

canvas tents were pitched with regularity, and the arms of each regiment piled in line in front of their respective quarters, under the charge of sentries, with their colours of crimson silk, bearing a crescent and a star, planted three paces in advance.

Walking through the camp we made a circuit outside the town, passing under the kasbah, from whence a beautiful view is obtained of a richly wooded, well-cultivated country, the bright walls of the whitewashed villages, and the domes of the numerous marabouts, contrasting pleasantly with the varied hues of green, appearing in the landscape. A little to the southward of the town is the present harbour, small and insecure. Susa ranks in the Regency, next to Tunis, as a place of export, and carries on a considerable trade in olive oil and soap. On the beach were lying, half buried in the sand, several curious old guns, relics of the days when Tunis was a naval power; and a short distance from the shore the ancient port of Adrumetum is still visible, the greater part under water, but here and there the remains rising, like rocks, above the surface of the sea.

Re-entering the town by the Marine gate, we visited first, a soap manufactory. The process of soap-boiling is very simple; the extensive olive gardens supply the oil, and the alkali is procured from the ashes of a plant abundant in the neighbourhood. Ten baskets of ashes are mixed with four of quick-lime, and placed in a shallow tank; water is then added, which when impregnated with the caustic alkali is drawn off from the bottom into a small reservoir. The lye is boiled in a capacious iron vessel, shaped like an inverted cone, and the oil added by degrees. The boiling fluid is kept constantly stirred, and after awhile its consistency is tried by every now and then placing a drop or two on a board. Poured into wooden trays four inches deep, it is, when cold, cut into pieces, which are packed in baskets for exportation. The quality of the soap, from the absence of all inferior ingredients, such as tallow, &c., is excellent, and as the proportions are always the same, the only difference that can exist is that caused by the varying quality of the oil.

From the soap manufactory we proceeded to an oil-mill, to witness the method of pressing

the olives. They are gathered about the month of November, thrown together in heaps, with a little salt sprinkled over them, and pressed when convenient ; but nearly all the oil for exportation is expressed during December. In the centre of a large dark outhouse, the earthen floor slopped, and everything in it daubed with oil, we found a circular table of solid masonry, raised three feet from the ground ; upon this works a heavy stone roller revolving round a pivot, and put in motion by a camel. The olives are placed on the table, and a few revolutions are sufficient to reduce them, as well as the stones they contain, to a paste. For the finest oil this paste is placed in water, and being stirred with the hand, the oil rises to the surface, and is carefully skimmed off ; a portion of this is used by the higher classes for cookery, and the remainder is employed in the manufacture of the finer kinds of soap. For the second quality, the paste is put into flexible baskets, fifteen or twenty of which are placed in a pile, under a powerful lever, (in this mill, composed of four entire trees). To the end over the baskets, heavy weights are attached, and a large coarsely

constructed wooden screw, placed under the longer limb of the lever, produces the pressure requisite to flatten the baskets, the oil thus expressed running into large earthen jars embedded in the ground.

This is the oil used for burning, for making soap, and employed in cookery by all the poorer classes in the Regency, who, from habit, prefer the strong taste of the inferior oil to that of the finer, which they say is without flavour. The rollers employed in crushing the olives are generally supplied by the nearest ruins, and columns of the rarest and most precious marbles are cut up into lengths for this purpose. The camels employed in the mills are often vicious, and one making a snap at us as we passed, led to the narration of an anecdote, shewing that the camel, usually considered so dull and stupid, is not inferior in apparently reasoning powers, to many other animals.

A year or two ago it chanced that a valuable camel, working in the oil mill, was severely beaten by its driver, who perceiving that the camel had treasured up the injury, and was only waiting a favourable opportunity for revenge, kept a strict watch

upon the animal. Time passed away ; the camel, perceiving that it was watched, was quiet and obedient, and the driver began to think that the beating was forgotten, when one night, after the lapse of several months, the man, who slept on a raised platform in the mill, whilst, as is customary, the camel was stalled in a corner, happening to remain awake, observed by the bright moonlight that when all was quiet the animal looked cautiously around, rose softly, and stealing towards a spot where a bundle of clothes and a berious thrown carelessly on the ground resembled a sleeping figure, cast itself with violence upon them, rolling with all its weight, and tearing them most viciously with its teeth. Satisfied that its vengeance was complete, the camel was returning to its corner, when the driver sat up and spoke ; at the sound of his voice, and perceiving the mistake it had made, the animal was so mortified at the failure and discovery of its scheme, that it dashed its head against the wall, and died on the spot. Such was the story as related by the dragoman, and the owner of the mill vouched for its authenticity.

Next morning we paid a long visit to the

Vice-Kaïd, and sat with him whilst he was engaged in dispensing justice. The administration of the laws is carried on throughout the Regency with simplicity and despatch ; any individual who may have cause of complaint, either civil or criminal, against another, attends, at an hour which is known to all, before the Kaïd or other authority ; the accused is sent for, both parties plead their own cause, and the decision is generally given at once ; the laws being contained in the Koran are tolerably well known, and if the passage bearing upon any particular case is obscure, the judge will ask the assistance of a priest to explain it. Except in a case where the Kaïd is personally concerned, the judgments are usually just and impartial. Great crimes are of rare occurrence in the towns and villages, and executions very seldom take place ; fines, the bastinado, and imprisonment are the usual punishments, the former being preferred by the authorities, who seldom allow a person of property convicted of any offence, to escape without suffering severely as to his purse.

The Vice-Kaïd is a man of information, tolerably free from prejudice, and spoke

openly upon all matters relating to the management of his district. He conducted us over his house, and in doing so passed the prison, which is in the lower part near the stable ; the prisoners were confined in a small apartment, with a strongly barred window opening towards the street, where several of their friends were standing conversing with them, one man every now and then passing his pipe through the grating to an acquaintance within. The prisoners are wretchedly fed, coarse bread of the worst description and a little oil being all that is allowed them ; except, however, it is especially forbidden, their friends are permitted to supply them with provisions. At this time there were only five prisoners, three were confined for debt, the fourth had refused to pay a fine that had been imposed upon him, pleading poverty as an excuse, although he was known to have money concealed, and the fifth, who was accused of theft, was imprisoned on account of the absence of the prosecutor.

Seeing the Kaïd sign several papers, by affixing the impression of his seal, in black ink, on the back of the document, placing it exactly behind the last line, to prevent any

additions being made to the writing, we asked for a couple of impressions, and produced a piece of blank paper for the purpose. These he seemed unwilling to furnish, and then explained, that if the paper were lost, any person who found it might fill it up as he liked, and that consequences as disagreeable as had happened to one of his predecessors might ensue.

Sixty years ago, a servant of the then Kaïd of Susa managed to secure three or four impressions of his master's seal, probably during his sleep, and then, filling up the papers with acknowledgments that his master was indebted to him various sums amounting in all to ten thousand piastres, he summoned him before the Bey, and demanded repayment of the debt. In vain the Kaïd protested he had never borrowed even a "bourba" from his servant, he produced witnesses, who proved that the plaintiff, so far from possessing ten thousand piastres to lend, never had a hundred in his life; all was of no avail, his seal was examined, and on comparison the impressions were pronounced to be genuine; the Kaïd himself could not deny it, and he was ordered to pay the sum. The decision,

unjust as it may seem, was founded on the principle that it was impossible for any one to repudiate his own signature, particularly in cases of this sort, where the transaction was supposed to be confined to two parties, either of whom, to answer his purpose, might deny his own act. The servant did not, however, get clear off; the money which he claimed was paid to him, and then the Bey asked, how he, a poor servant, had become possessed of so large a sum as he had lent his master? he could not account for it—the Bey decided that he must have obtained the money dishonestly, ordered him to be bastinadoed, and the ten thousand piastres to be confiscated. Thus the Kaid received a lesson in law, the servant was punished, and the Bey got the money.

The seal is always worn about the person, except by the Bey, whose seal is entrusted to the care of the prime minister, and from this charge he derives his official appellation of "Saheb-el-taba," or Lord of the Seal. The devices consist of the owner's name and title, with often a pious motto; the Bey's seal is of an oval form, two inches

in diameter, in the centre is his name and titles,* and it is surrounded by a double border containing verses from the Koran. Those of other individuals are much smaller. That we might have his seal without any risk to himself, the Vice-Kaïd had two orders made out upon a neighbouring village that we did not intend visiting, and gave them to us duly signed.

Whilst our horses were getting ready, we purchased an engraved cornelian and several coins, from a Jew trader who procures them from the Arabs and inhabitants of the villages, when they visit the town to attend the markets. At noon we left Susa for Monasteer ; and as there was no fear of robbers, we allowed our baggage to follow, under the charge of two of our escort, and cantered along the firm sea-beach to the southward.

The low sandy plain to our right, was covered with groves of the date-palm ; this being the most northern spot in the Regency

* The style of the sovereign of Tunis is “the Musheer Ahmed Basha Bey.” Musheer signifies literally counsellor, and is the title of a Turkish Basha, of the rank which the viceroys of Tunis held when they were appointed by the Porte ; it has been continued by the succeeding Beys. The European governments address the Bey as his Highness.

where they are cultivated ; for, although they do not ripen here sufficiently for preservation, they are used fresh, and the trees produce great quantities of " leghma," the sap of the palm, which is obtained in the same manner as in India and elsewhere, by making incisions in the upper part of the trunk, or by cutting off the head of the plant.

Near the point where the coast takes a sweep to the eastward, forming the Ras, or Cape, Misteer, we crossed a small stream, and the bed of a salt lake, almost dry, a portion of which, however, was covered with a thick growth of weeds, which teemed with wild fowl of every description. We now rode through continuous plantations of olives, &c., to the extreme point of the promontory where the town of Monasteer is situated ; half a dozen flags flying from its walls, and the closed gates, told us that it was the Mahometan Sabbath, and that the hour of mid-day prayer was not yet over. This is a custom peculiar to all fortified places in the Regency, every gate being shut during the mid-day service, which commences at half-past one, and occupies from an hour to an hour and a half. This practice has its origin

in an ancient prophecy that, some Friday during mid-day prayer, the Christians will enter Tunis and other walled towns, by means of the gates left accidentally open, and that the ruin of the country, and downfall of the Mahometan faith, will speedily follow. After sunset, the gates of towns are invariably closed ; and the traveller arriving after dark, must make up his mind to spend the night outside, unless they have, like Monasteer, Kairouan, and one or two other places, "houhah," or narrow, low passages, cut winding through the wall close to the great gate, just large enough for a man of moderate size, when bent double, to creep through.

We might have entered in this manner, but we preferred waiting until the gates were opened, and passed the time in riding about the fields in the immediate vicinity of the town. The soil is good, water plentiful, and the inhabitants tolerably industrious ; for, in place of the slovenly style of agriculture in the northern part of the Regency, and in Algeria, the land was divided by hedges of the cactus and aloe, and laid out in squares, with channels for irrigation con-

ducting to each from reservoirs, which are supplied with water raised from wells by the labour of camels or oxen. On entering, we were received by the Kaïd, who seemed rather inclined to play the great man, and proposed to quarter us upon a rich Jew merchant, a proposition to which we by no means assented, stating our intention of occupying a room in his house, which was the best in the town. Upon this, he became very civil, and said that by the time we returned from our walk round the town, everything would be prepared for us.

Built on the shore, a little to the south of the extreme point of the cape, Monasteer, or, as it is called by the Arabs, Misteer, contains about six thousand inhabitants. The fortifications are similar to those of other towns, and the kasbah, with its battlemented walls, and a lofty tower rising in the centre, is placed on the side nearest the sea. The port is small and of no great importance, and formed principally by two small islands of soft sand-stone that lie near the shore, perforated by a hundred caves and passages, of which the use or history is unknown. The sand-stone of which the

headland is composed, is of a peculiarly friable nature, and in places where the surface of the rock had been exposed to the action of the weather, it bore the appearance of petrified moss, crumbling when touched.

In many of the gardens in the neighbourhood, are country houses to which the wealthier residents retire during the hot weather. There are also numerous Marabouts who, here as well as elsewhere, keep in proper order the tombs of holy men, which are resorted to by the Moorish women, if report does not belie them, as much for the purpose of intrigue as for devotion.

The trade of Monasteer consists of oil, soap, and grain; but most of the business is transacted by the merchants of Susa. In one of the open spaces within the town, were large heaps of the refuse of the olives after the oil had been expressed; it is formed into bricks, which, when dried in the sun, have the appearance of light-coloured peat, and make excellent fuel; it is also at times given as food to camels, and, in seasons of scarcity, the poor mix it with the flour of which they make their bread. On returning at sunset, after a long and pleasant walk, we

found that the Kaïd had kept his word : three rooms that had once been occupied as a harem, were fitted up with silken cushions, and coverlets ; and, in due course of time, an excellent supper made its appearance, accompanied by a couple of bottles of tolerable Sicilian wine.

Next morning, the 19th, we started at an early hour for Mahadeah. A short distance below Monasteer, long lines of stakes are seen extending to a considerable distance from the land ; these form the enclosures where the tunny are caught, at the season of their annual visit to the shores of the Mediterranean. The fish, finding their course interrupted, follow the line of the basket-work barrier, which leads them into a small pen from which they are unable to escape. The Bey retains the sole right of the tunny fishery, which he farms out on lease, but the receipts from this source, once considerable, are now much diminished, as the number of fish has fallen off greatly within the last few years. The produce is always very uncertain, and as the expenses are great, the lessee as often loses as gains by the speculation. The method of con-

ducting the fishery varies very little from that followed on the opposite coast of the Mediterranean.

For the next three hours, we rode either on the beach or through plantations of olive, palm, and other fruit trees. The numerous villages near the sea shore were surrounded with cultivated fields, gardens, and orchards, proving the fertility of the soil. Various kinds of vegetables were thriving luxuriantly ; the trees were laden with fruit ; rich blossoms covered the pomegranate ; and the karoobas attaining a considerable size, with their still swelling pods pendent amidst their foliage, cast a grateful shade around. After passing, amongst others, the villages of Hanis, Kseebah, and the ruins of an ancient town, to which the modern name of Boo-hajar, or the Father of Stones, has been appropriately given, we arrived about noon at Lambtah, a village on the coast. The ruins of an extensive castle, built by the Saracens from the remains of the important city of Leptis, which formerly stood upon this spot, rise picturesquely in the centre of the clustering hovels. Many small articles, such as coins, gems, &c., are found by the villagers, in plough-

ing the neighbouring fields ; and, during our halt, they offered several for sale. The day was not oppressively hot, the thermometer, at noon, marking sixty-nine degrees in the shade ; but the bright sun and our ride caused us to enjoy the fresh palm wine, which they placed before us in an earthen jar, shaped after an antique model.

A ride of two hours through the villages of Seyadah and Toobulbah brought us to Imcaltah, a small village near Ras Demass. The country was even more fertile than to the north of Lambtah ; and, what is rather a rare sight in Africa, a considerable portion of the population were labouring in the fields. Light, rudely constructed ploughs, drawn by an ox, a camel, or an ass, were turning up the soil between the olive trees. Great attention is paid to irrigation ; water courses run between the rows of trees, and, by means of small channels branching to the right and left, water is supplied to any single tree that may require it, and is retained as long as necessary around its roots, by slight ridges of earth. The olive groves in this district contain trees of a great age and size, and accounted the largest in Africa. Of

immense girth, many are half decayed, with trunks rent and cracked from top to bottom ; and, although they may have sheltered Cæsar and his army, they still bear fruit, and their upper branches are green with the freshly sprung leaves of the new year.*

After feeding our horses, we sent on the baggage to Mahadeah ; and, accompanied by the head man of the village, rode round by Ras Demass, the site of Thapsus, a powerful city, celebrated for the battle fought beneath its walls, in which Scipio and Juba were defeated by Cæsar, who was besieging it. This victory it was that gave Africa to Cæsar, and led to the death of Cato.

The principal remains of the ancient city are the ruins of a solidly constructed pier, thirty feet wide, and formed of small stones and mortar, which has withstood the fury of the waves, although the outward casing of wrought stone has perished ; it still extends one hundred and eighty yards from the shore. To the westward of the pier, lie the

* The appearance of some of these trees warrant the assignment to them of the greatest age to which the olive can attain. The longevity of the olive has been computed at two thousand five hundred years. The battle of Thapsus was fought in the year 47 B. c.

ruins of an extensive edifice, and those of an amphitheatre. To the southwest, are the cisterns, twenty-five in number, each two hundred and seventeen feet in length by ten and a half in breadth. The aqueduct that supplied them and the amphitheatre with water remains in many places nearly perfect; and the natives stated that it can be traced to what is now a sebkah, or salt lake, but which, previously to an irruption of the sea, caused by a violent storm, contained fresh water.

Sir Thomas Reade commenced excavating here a few years since, but the proceeds were so trifling, that the work was abandoned. We spent so much time amid the ruins, that the nine miles of coast to Mahadeah could with difficulty be accomplished by dusk, and as the night fell, we entered the town.

CHAPTER V.

Our reception by Sidi Hadji Mohamed Hamsa—Mahadeah—Its history—Spanish fortifications—Ancient harbour—Cisterns—Tombs—Saracenic ruin—Xuruckseff—Friendly reception—Sketching and taking portraits—The evil eye—Amulets—Questions and answers—Early start—The curse of blood—The Smalah of the Kaïd of Sfax—Jellooli—Arab Women—Rouga—Long ride—Jebiniana—Uncomfortable night.

MAHADEAH not being the station of any government official, we occupied a house the property of a wealthy Moor, Sidi Hadji Mohamed Hamsa, who had been ordered by the Kaïd of Monasteer to receive us. The evening was enlivened by a furious squabble, arising out of the manner in which we had been received ; for the order sent from Monasteer, instead of being a formal letter, was written on a dirty scrap of paper, which had hurt the Hadji's pride, and although he did not dare to disobey it, he made no further

preparation than to open the door of an uninhabited house. This excited the anger of our people, but when supper was sent in their indignation was at its height. As far as we were concerned the supply was ample, quite sufficient for a party twice our strength, but as it was considered an intentional slight that a man of the Hadji's wealth had not sent a more liberal meal, we sacrificed our supper to our dignity, and ordered it to be instantly returned. We threatened to report his conduct to the Bey, and if we had done so he would have been heavily fined, but he apologized next morning, and I believe that Sidi Abdallah and Baba Jebb received a handsome present to say nothing about it on their return to the Bardo.

We were indebted to the hospitality of Signor — for our supper, and early next morning he accompanied us over the town. Mahadeah (or Africa, as it is sometimes called by Europeans), one of the poorest places in the Regency, is in appearance one of the most remarkable. Placed on a low peninsula of rock, and naturally a strong position, it is supposed to be the site of the "Turris Hannibalis" of ancient geographers, which name

has, however, been also assigned to extensive ruins at Salecto, some miles to the southward. The more modern history of Mahadeah is better known. The first Fatimite Caliph of Kairouan, who, rising into power as a religious reformer, had assumed the title of "Mahadi," or director, founded or rebuilt the town, to which he gave his own name, about the year 940, A. D. Towards the middle of the sixteenth century it was seized by the famous Dragut, who afterwards fell at the memorable siege of Malta, and in whose possession it remained but for a short time, being taken by a Christian force, and then strongly fortified by Charles V., who intended to make it an impregnable fortress and a station for his cruisers. Not answering his expectations, the town was abandoned and the works destroyed.

It is to this that Mahadeah owes its picturesque appearance; immense fragments of the wall, with its mouldering towers, their weather-beaten remains blending with the rock on which they stand, encircle the town; the Kasbah rises in the centre, and a modern fort near the gate is placed close to a rival mass of masonry, one of the remnants of the

Spanish works which guarded the neck of the isthmus. Containing a population of four thousand, the inhabitants and the houses seemed equally poverty-stricken ; the trade is inconsiderable, although the present harbour on the south side of the promontory is safe and sheltered, with a sufficient depth of water for coasting vessels. The ancient harbour, excavated in the space within the walls, was of an oblong form, one hundred and forty-eight paces by seventy-four, and communicated with the sea by a narrow channel, now dry and partially filled up with rubbish. There are numerous cisterns in the town, but the most remarkable are those near the Kasbah, formed in the solid rock ; they are of great depth, and the flat roofs that received the rain-water are still supported by a double range of arches, one above the other.

At the eastern extremity of the cape there are many shallow tombs cut in the rock, some still contain skeletons, but nothing extraneous has ever been found in them, except that an arm-bone was discovered, wrapped round with a bandage to which some pitchy substance still adhered. Several, from their

small size, must have been the graves of children, but there was one, of full length, which had evidently held double.

Scattered in different directions are stone shot of considerable size, to discharge which guns of large calibre must have been required. During our progress we discovered the cause of the black, stagnant appearance of the ponds in the neighbourhood of many of the villages through which we had passed. Several women were engaged in obtaining oil for immediate use by pounding a few handfuls of olives with a stone, and then placing the paste in the nearest puddle and skimming off the oil as it rose to the surface. The olives thus treated are those of the worst description, which from fermentation and never having ripened, are small, shrivelled, and quite black.

Three miles from Mahadeah, to the westward, stand the ruins of an ancient Saracenic building of great beauty ; it was of small dimensions, consisting only of a vault beneath the surface, and two stories above ; the interior is fourteen feet and a half square, the walls nearly five feet in thickness, and an octangular tower formerly stood at each

corner of the building. The masonry is executed with the greatest nicety of finish, and a band, two feet in width, sculptured with an inscription in highly ornamented Kufic characters, runs round the edifice at the height of twenty feet from the ground, and divides the exterior into two portions. Traces of an inclosure at some distance from the building still remain. The country people have no tradition relating to it, but from its general appearance, and from the fragments of the inscription which I had translated on my return to Tunis proving to be portions of a verse of the Koran, I infer that it was probably erected over the tomb of some distinguished leader, in the early period of the Mahometan rule, perhaps over that of Mahadi himself, the founder of the town.

Towards the afternoon we started for Kuruckseff, riding for two hours through an uninteresting country. We were received on our arrival with the greatest cordiality, and the three principal inhabitants of the place conducted us over the straggling village. It lies southwest from Mahadeah, on the verge of the plain of Kairouan, surrounded with monotonous olive groves, which

when seen day after day become wearisome to the eye.

Ascending an adjoining height, I employed myself in sketching the village, whilst Lord Feilding was employed in taking the portraits of our companions, who were at first unconscious of what he was about ; two of them thought it a capital joke, and insisted on writing their names underneath the figures, lest they should be forgotten ; and one, taking from his girdle his pen-case and a crumpled piece of paper, sat down with a most amusing air of gravity to take our likenesses, and in due course of time, after the consumption of all the ink in his case, produced two diabolical misrepresentations of the human form, which we had to identify with ourselves by placing our names beneath. A third man who had accompanied us, we afterwards discovered had hurried off in a terrible fright, from dread of the "evil eye," and any misfortune that may befall him in the course of the next year we were informed would be laid at our door.

This fear of the evil eye, the effects of which they believe to be the work of malignant demons that delight in injuring man-

kind, and generally make use of strangers as their unconscious instruments, is universal, even amongst the better orders. An instance of this occurred to us in the sook at Sfax ; struck with the appearance of a lovely child of four or five years of age, I was pointing him out to my companion, when, in an instant, a woman, I suppose the mother, seized the child in her arms with every symptom of terror, and, spitting in its face, rubbed the saliva with her hand across the child's forehead as a counter-charm against the supposed injurious influence of the evil eye, conveyed in the admiring glance of a stranger.

Nearly all the Moors and Arabs wear charms or amulets about their persons, especially the women and children. These charms are composed of a most heterogenous collection of articles, but those in which the greatest faith is placed consist of various combinations of words and sentences from the Koran, and the more mysterious and incomprehensible they are, the greater is the efficacy they are supposed to possess. Usually concocted by the Marabouts, much of their virtue is also supposed to depend

upon the peculiar sanctity of the individual who may have manufactured them. Sewn up in leather, and sometimes placed in little embroidered bags, the amulets are worn not only by men, women, and children, but are frequently suspended about the necks of animals ; five out of the eight horses we had with us were thus equipped. Inanimate objects are also imagined to partake of the benefit believed to be derived from these devices, for the representation of an open hand—which is considered a potent charm against all spells of genii, demons, and evil spirits—is often affixed to houses ; and the scallop-shell, so common an ornament on the capitals of columns, &c., is said to have been intended originally as a rude imitation of a hand.

The Sheick, who was building a new house, made many apologies for not having better accommodation to offer us, and took great pride in shewing us over the unfinished apartments. During the evening the leading characters of Xuruckseff joined the party, and old Baba Jebb was kept hard at work as an interpreter. Great curiosity was expressed to hear something about England, and innumerable questions were asked as to

how far it was off, what was the size of the largest town, &c. ; but I am afraid that the replies were not always very correctly conveyed, for Baba Jebb at last grew sleepy, and if the answers that we got to our questions may be taken as specimens of those that the Arabs received, he must have made a sad mess of it. What seemed to puzzle them most was the fact of our sovereign being a woman ; and as for the description of London, its size, number of inhabitants, and the ships in the Thames, I have little doubt but that they thought it all a lying exaggeration, although they were too well bred to say so.

The Sheick was greatly pleased with a small quantity of English gunpowder that we gave him, and still more so with several dozen copper caps, for he had a French percussion gun, and as far as we could learn it seemed that he had never possessed a cap in his life. A provoking accident happened this day, Angelo having succeeded in breaking the barometer ; the large thermometer having been crushed to pieces the day before, by one of the baggage horses rolling upon it, rendered the mishap the more annoying, as we were now entering that part of the country

in which we had particularly wished to take observations.

As it was uncertain where we should halt the next night, we started at an early hour, being in our saddles at a quarter to three. Our object was to reach the "smalah"^{*} of the Kaïd of Sfax at a sufficiently early hour to enable us to resume our march in the afternoon. The smalah was known to have been removed within a day or two, and we only received a general direction as to where we were likely to find it.

Shortly after leaving the village, Sidi Abdallah sent on one of the Hambas as an advanced guard, and warned us to look to our arms and keep together. Although there was but little fear of our being attacked yet it was as well to be prepared, for the plain of Kairouan is a favourite resort for roving parties of the marauding tribes, who descend from the mountains to the westward for the purpose of plundering travellers. As if to give a colouring of reality to the long stories of murders and robberies which Baba Jebb was relating, for the benefit of all parties

* A douar is called a smalah when it is the habitual residence of a distinguished chief, and when it contains his family and personal property.

first in Arabic and then in Italian, we passed some heaps of stones, just visible in the obscurity of the early morning, the rude memorials of deeds of blood committed on the spot. It is a custom that each passer-by should cast a stone upon the heap, and as he does so he lays the curse of blood upon the perpetrator of the murder, dooming him to perish by the same death that another had received at his hands ; the mound of stones piled on the victim's grave being symbolical of the united curses of mankind heaped upon the head of the murderer.

Our route lay south-westerly for some distance, through uncultivated plantations of stunted olives and patches of brushwood, which grew scantier as we advanced across the dreary plain. For nearly five hours we rode without catching sight of tent, flock, or human being, and the sole incident that occurred to vary the scene was at day-break, when a herd of gazelles sprang up affrighted, from a hollow near our track, and, as they fled, in the dull gray light of the morning, seemed but bounding shadows, soon lost to view in the floating mist that hung over the surface of the ground.

At eight o'clock we discovered three

douars, pitched within short distances of each other, and, receiving proper directions for our course, arrived two hours afterwards at the smalah. Gellooli, the Kaïd of Sfax, is reported to be the wealthiest man in the Regency, his father having been one of the most enterprising and successful pirates of modern days. During several months in the year he leaves the town and wanders with his smalah over the extensive plains of his government ; his tent is a very grand affair, of large size, lined with coloured drapery, and divided by curtains into three compartments. Having when a young man spent some time with his father at Malta, he speaks Italian and has a liking for the English ; it was only with great difficulty that we were allowed to take our departure at noon. The Kaïd added to our party four armed horsemen, who were to guide us to Rouga, the ruins of the ancient city of Carraga.

Two miles from the smalah we stopped to allow our horses to drink at a small pond of dirty water, the first we had seen since the morning, and here we found nearly all the women and girls of the smalah. There were forty or fifty females of all ages, many of them standing

above their knees in the water, engaged in filling the goat skins, that, daubed with tar and tallow, give such a detestable flavour to their brackish contents. Even when we rode in amongst them they were not in the least chary of exposing their charms, and many of the younger girls who were in the water with their garments tucked up, made a liberal display of form and figure. One or two were decidedly pretty, a few tolerably good-looking, but the majority, to say the least of it, were very plain, and some of the elderly ladies frightfully ugly.

At Rouga there are two sets of cisterns of considerable magnitude, and nearly perfect. They are of an unusual form, being circular, and the largest, which is one hundred and twenty feet in diameter, has its roof supported by eight rows of square piers, the arches between each formed of five blocks of stone. The only access to them is by a narrow underground passage, leading to a breach in the side wall. The débris of the ancient city, extends over several acres of ground, and the remains of a triumphal arch are still standing.

We were now not very far from El Jem,

which lay a few hours journey to the north-west.

Whilst in the cisterns I was seized with my old Chinese enemy the ague, and knowing from past experience that if the fit proved a severe one I should not be able to sit my horse, there was nothing left for it but to gallop on to Jebiniana, the village where we were to pass the night. Taking with us Scheadli, the hamba who was best mounted, we rode through a region still more dreary than that traversed in the morning, a peculiar appearance of desolation being given to the scenery by the wild olives, their dwarfed and withered forms possessing just sufficient vitality to retain existence, scattered at distant intervals over the sandy soil.

The noon-day heat had been oppressive, but towards evening the heavens grew black with clouds, the rain descended like a water spout, and being driven by the wind that swept furiously across the naked plain, our horses refused to face it. To add to our discomfort we now found out that we had lost our way ; Scheadli knew nothing about it, and at last, after riding about for some time

in the vain hope of discovering a douar, we determined to make for the sea shore. At half past six we entered a cultivated olive garden, and overtook a labourer mounted on a camel, which bore also on its back a bundle of hoes and three entire ploughs. The labourer was returning home to Jebiniana, where we arrived a little before eight, having been sixteen hours on the road ; our baggage, which we had left at Rouga to come on quietly, having arrived an hour before us. Whether the change of weather or the excitement of being lost effected the cure, I know not, but by this time I was much better.

Jebiniana, a small village a shade better than Hergla, has the character of possessing a lawless, thieving set of inhabitants, and Baba Jebb made a great fuss about arranging the arms for the night, and insisted upon one of the hambas sleeping across the inside of the doorway. We afterwards heard that some native travellers had been attacked and robbed a few weeks previously, in passing near the village ; but that is a very different affair from a well armed party, like ourselves, who carried nothing likely to tempt the cupidity

of plunderers, except our arms, which they would have found it no easy matter to take ; enquiries would besides have been made if any thing had happened to us, whilst a few natives, or half a dozen camel-loads of merchandise, more or less, would not much signify ; and, in case of a night attack, it is so difficult to identify the assailants that unless the matter is taken up seriously by the government at Tunis, they generally escape.

We had flattered ourselves that by this time we had become flea-proof, but this night's experience proved our mistake ; every article of outer clothing that we had with us was soaked in the rain, and as the nights were cold, we were obliged to borrow a couple of rugs from the Sheick. Tired as we were, sleep was out of the question ; myriads of tormentors swarmed over us ; they issued from the blankets, the mats, the ceiling of the chamber, and from the crevices in the whitewashed wall, from whence, by the light of the lamp, we could see them advancing in squadrons to the attack,—ears, eyes and noses were invaded ; I do not think it pos-

sible to pass a more detestable night, and the heavy complaints made in the morning by all, even by the Arab servant, who ought to have been well accustomed to such companions, proved that they had been more than usually annoying.

CHAPTER VI.

Inchla—The sand grouse—Sfax—Its trade—Gerbeh—Moorish cookery—The Kaid's country house—Flowers—Gardens, and the house tax—Freedom from bigotry—Bivouac—An alarm—The Amphitheatre of El Jem—Ruins of Tysdrus—Saltpetre works—Medical practice among the Arabs—Arab school—The Hadji's well—The plain of Kairouan—The Holy City.

GLADLY welcoming the first rays of the sun, on the morning of the 22nd, we left Jebiniana for Sfax at five o'clock. The thunder-storm of the preceding evening had cleared the air, and the fresh invigorating breeze was a grateful change from the atmosphere of the wretched little chamber where eight persons had passed the night, stowed, with their saddlery and baggage, into a space twenty feet long by six wide.

A little more than an hour's ride brought us to Inchla, the ruins of a temple, or, more probably, of a Christian church, which at

some period subsequent to its foundation, had been converted into a fortress. The walls had been greatly increased in thickness, and round towers added at each corner; the original square edifice serving merely as a skeleton to the more modern building. The roof also had been replaced by three oblong vaults, resting upon antique marble pillars, their capitals sculptured with fruit, flowers, and birds, and having a ram's head at each angle, the whole now very much defaced. Around are scattered the insignificant remains of an ancient town, and numerous wells are sunk in the neighbourhood, many of which are used for irrigation at the present day.

Besides partridges and quail, we found to-day, for the first time, the banded sand-grouse,* a remarkably handsome bird about the size of a partridge, of an ash colour, speckled with dark spots, a rich black band across the breast, and the whole of the under part of the body of the same hue. This bird prefers rocky, stony ground, is swift and strong on the wing, and when sprung, utters a very peculiar guttural note, which is repeated during its flight.

* *Pterocles Arenarius.*

Proceeding along the plain, we kept a direct course for Sfax, cutting off the angle formed by a sweep of the coast, at the extreme point of which stands the fort of Bordj Sidi Masour. Five miles from Sfax, the aspect of the country had completely changed, although the nature of the soil remained the same. In place of the naked, untilled plain, the road lay between earthen banks, planted with cactus, enclosing a succession of olive-groves and gardens, studded with the towers and country houses at which the inhabitants of the town are accustomed to pass the hottest months of summer.

Emerging from this wide belt of verdure, forming a semicircle around three sides of the town, we came in view of Sfax, half a mile distant. Standing on the sea-shore, the only objects visible over the battlemented walls were the kasbah, the towers of the mosques, the tops of a few houses more ambitiously built than their neighbours, and the feathery crowns of some scattered palms imprisoned within the walls and waving gracefully in the wind: A Tunisian frigate lay at anchor in the roads, and several small coasting vessels and Maltese boats were lying in the harbour.

Crossing the tract of barren sand that lies between the town and the gardens, we entered Sfax at noon, and proceeded to the Kaïd's house, where we were received by his elder son, the Kaïd having sent off a messenger from the smalah the day previously, to inform him of our probable arrival.

Sfax, or Sfakus, with a population of thirteen thousand inhabitants—owing to its local position with regard to the Jereed and the island of Gerbeh, the manufacturing districts of the Tunisian dominions—is a place of considerable trade.* It is also renowned for the abundance and flavour of the pistachio-nuts, the produce of the neighbouring gardens, and immense quantities of these, as well as of almonds, are exported annually. The town, as to its buildings and internal arrangements, only varies from those before described inasmuch as it possesses the widest and cleanest street in the Regency, extending from the inner gate to the harbour.

* The principal manufactures and productions of the Jereed, are berrous of various qualities, haicks, coarse woollens, carpets and rugs, striped with brilliant colours,—saltpetre, dates, and henna, together with a few articles from the interior. Those of Gerbeh are the beautiful stuffs of mingled wool and silk, shawls, and pottery.

After having made inquiries, we found ourselves obliged to abandon our plan of visiting the island of Gerbeh, on account of the difficulty of getting back to the main land, the wind often continuing to blow from the same quarter for weeks ; a Roman Catholic priest, who had gone off for two days, had already been detained a fortnight, and, it was stated, would very probably have to wait another ere he could return. Although we had selected a boat to take us over, we could not afford time to run the risk of being wind-bound, so that we were obliged, reluctantly, to renounce our intention.

At seven o'clock we dined with the Kaid's second son, the governor of the town, under his father, who rules over an extensive district. As the first dishes were placed on the table, a long napkin was passed round, so as to serve for the whole party, and the dinner was a triumph of the science of cookery, as practised by the Moors. Amongst the numerous dishes the following were especially worthy of note : pigeons roasted, and stuffed with a pudding composed of almonds, pistachio-nuts, raisins, pepper, spices, herbs, and crumbs of bread, mixed with butter,

and slightly flavoured with saffron ; lamb-cutlets stewed in a rich sauce, with sweet almonds ; small triangular pieces of light pastry, containing a spoonful of forcemeat, and fried in oil ; mutton stuffed with pistachio-nuts ; and greens boiled in oil to the consistence of porridge. Besides all these we had the usual Moorish dishes, soups, hashes, sweetmeats, &c., finishing with couscousso ; we were also supplied with very tolerable wine.

Next morning we went to see the Kaid's country house and garden, situated three quarters of a mile from the western gate of the town. The sandy space between the gardens and the walls was white with innumerable tombs, the domes of several ma-rabouts interspersed amongst them slightly varying the sameness of the oblong slabs. Passing through a gate, to which is attached a porter's lodge, and up an avenue of cypresses, we reached the house, an irregular building of no beauty. In one of the interior courts was an open bath, containing several feet of water, clear as crystal, which mirrored the deep blue of the lovely sky, and the graceful foliage of an adjacent palm tree.

From the terraced roof there is an extensive view of the sandy coast of the gulf of Gabs,* of the low islands of the Kerkennas, and of the town, fenced in from the wide expanse of the barren plain by the broad belt of the surrounding gardens, gay with a profusion of roses, jasmine, and other flowers, thriving luxuriantly in a soil little other than pure sand. The fondness for flowers shewn at Tunis is still more prevalent at Sfax, nearly every person seen in the streets has a rose, or small bouquet, and the favourite method of carrying them is to insert the stalks under the head-dress, so that the blossoms rest upon the cheek ; a rosebud, fresh gathered, pure, and fragrant, with its blushing leaves just opening to the day, is thus often seen reposing on the dirt-be grimed features of a squalid beggar. The ottos, both of the white and red rose and of the jasmine, are prepared at Sfax ; the former is inferior to that of Tunis, but the latter is considered the finest in the world, and is very highly esteemed through-

* The rise and fall of the tide is greater in the gulf of Gabs than in any other part of the Mediterranean.

out the Levant, selling, when unadulterated, at four times the price of the otto of rose.

Almost every family in Sfax, excepting the very poorest, possesses one or more of these gardens, to which they retire during the heats of summer, and as the cultivated ground is five or six miles in width, and many of the gardens do not contain more than an acre, they must be very numerous ; but every body that we questioned made it such a point of honour to exaggerate, that it was impossible even to guess how many there really were. An occurrence that took place in connexion with these gardens during the reign of a former Bey, proves that their number must be considerable. — It happened that, in common with the other towns of the Regency, an impost was laid upon Sfax, which the inhabitants considered to be too heavy, and accordingly petitioned the Bey for a remission of at least a portion of the tax. The Bey granted their request by offering, if they were willing, to receive in lieu of the tax of which they complained, a certain small sum which he named, from the proprietor of every garden in which stood

a house of a certain size ; the commutation was accepted with gratitude by the inhabitants, and it was not until after this popular house-tax had been collected, that they discovered it amounted to nearly double the sum originally demanded.

In Sfax is to be found fresh evidence of the reigning Bey's freedom from religious bigotry, for a Roman Catholic chapel, with all the outward marks of a Christian place of worship, is in course of erection on a site granted by the Bey for the express purpose, and the stones employed in its construction are taken by his permission from some ancient ruins on the adjacent islands of the Kerkennas.

Coins and engraved stones are frequently to be procured from the Jews of Sfax, and we were tolerably fortunate in our purchases. In the sooks we did not succeed so well, as owing to the contrary winds that had prevailed for some time past, there had been no arrivals from Gerbeh ; in the whole town there was only one specimen of the beautiful fabrics of the island to be obtained, and as for the far famed otto of jasmine, the last bottle of the first quality had been sent off

to Tunis a few days previously to our arrival, and there was not a drop to be procured in the town.

At three, P.M., we commenced our journey northwards to El Jem. Leaving behind us Sfax and its gardens, we entered upon the plain, and having passed the Marabout of Sidi Salah, three hours ride from Sfax, we continued our monotonous route till dusk, when, there being no douar within many miles, we halted for the night under a solitary, stunted olive, near a puddle of muddy, brackish water. Sidi Abdallah would not allow a fire to be lighted for fear of attracting the notice of wandering parties, but the night was fine, and it was no hardship to be without one. Having hobbled the horses, placed our arms in readiness, and supped on some cold provisions we had brought with us, the whole party lay down, with the exception of one, who mounted guard, and Lord Feilding, who not feeling inclined to sleep, was taking a lesson in Arabic. I had been asleep for some time when I was aroused by several smart kicks, and starting up, I found my assailant to be no other than Mohamet, the Arab lad, who trembling in every limb, thrust

my gun into my hand. At this instant the Shawsh rushed forward, half drawing his sabre, and whilst we gathered round the tree, challenged a party who were approaching our bivouac. During the parley that ensued, the first four who came up were joined by five others; they declared themselves to be travellers, and were evidently as suspicious of us as we of them, and keeping together in a body, they moved off towards Sfax. As soon as the moon rose, our escort determined upon changing ground, in order, as Baba Jebb facetiously expressed it, that if our visitors should return with a reinforcement, they might find nothing but the chicken bones. After riding six or seven miles we again halted, and finding a bed upon some scrubby bushes, a few inches high, slept soundly until within an hour of day-break, when we were again in our saddles and *en route*.

Within a few miles of El Jem we observed an extensive salt lake, glittering in the sun; still nearer we passed some beds of reddish earth, from which saltpetre is extracted, and at eleven o'clock a turn in the road, as we entered a plantation of olives and cactus, disclosed to view the gigantic ruins of the

amphitheatre, towering above the wretched hovels of the village of El Jem, the modern representative of the once splendid city of Tysdrus.

Soon after our arrival we set forth, accompanied by half the population of the place, to the amphitheatre. It is seldom that expectations which have been highly raised by the descriptions of others, are not disappointed at the first view of the object, but here the reality far surpassed the utmost I had ever pictured to myself. Erected, according to Shaw's conjecture, during the reign of the Gordians, who were first recognised as Emperors at Tysdrus, this noble monument of imperial gratitude is rendered still more impressive by the desolation in the midst of which it stands.

The absence of all petty detail of ornament, as well as its imposing proportions, give an air of simple grandeur to the edifice. Oval in form, four hundred and twenty-nine feet in length, by three hundred and sixty-eight in breadth,* the façade consists of three

* These dimensions are from the work of Sir Grenville Temple, who is so correct in his measurements, that it would have been a waste of time to have repeated them, with the probable result of differing an inch or two.

ranges of arches, rising to the height of ninety-six feet, and above them are the remains of a fourth tier, which was destroyed during an insurrection by the Arabs, who converted the amphitheatre into a fortress, and used the stones as weapons of defence against their assailants. At this period, ninety years ago, the whole building was in good preservation, but to guard against such an occurrence for the future, the Bey ordered the great western entrance to be blown up with gunpowder, and since then it has served as a quarry, from whence stone may be procured at pleasure. With the exception of this breach, and the loss of the upper story, the exterior is nearly perfect; solidly built of hewn stone, many of the blocks that form the arches still bear the numbers cut upon them to prevent their being misplaced. The pillars and arches, sixty in number, vary slightly in each tier, and are of the Doric order, with Egyptian capitals.

It appears as though in the original plan, it had been intended that every key-stone of the lower tier of arches should bear an emblem, as a rough block projects from each, but only two, on the north side of the breach, are thus decorated, one having a female head,

and the other that of a lion, sculptured in bold relief, whilst the others remain unfinished. The interior is much injured, nothing remains except the sloping vaults that supported the rows of seats, the passages, and the connecting stairs, which have all perished. Although the exterior is of stone, the interior is built of concrete; and the lining of masonry having been destroyed, it has failed in many places, although there is enough left standing to afford access to every part of the ruin. The arena is covered with a deep bed of rubbish; but a gallery that runs underneath, to the centre of the amphitheatre, communicating with a square shaft, by which the wild beasts were introduced into the circus, is partially cleared, as are also several small chambers diverging to the right and left, in which the animals were confined. Myriads of hawks and jackdaws, dwelling together in unity, build their nests in the most inaccessible parts of the ruins.

As usual, the remains of Tysdrus lie buried in the soil; a few partial excavations have been made by the Arabs, in search of columns, which, when found, are sawn into proper lengths for the use of oil mills; owing to this many curious objects of antiquity have

been discovered, coins, bronzes, engraved stones, &c., and from the numerous tombs in the vicinity pottery, glass, and a few ornaments are easily obtained. In the course of the afternoon we opened two tombs, excavated in the rock, and covered with large slabs, imbedded in mortar as hard as the stone itself; they contained nothing but coarsely constructed earthen jars; in another, which we ordered to be opened next morning, a lamp, a small glass bottle, and the remains of a bronze finger ring were found. We purchased a considerable quantity of ancient pottery, amongst which were four vessels of fine red clay, grotesquely formed in the shape of birds and quadrupeds.

The cultivated ground near the village is barely sufficient to supply the wants of the seven hundred inhabitants. The mosque, the marabouts, and the village of El Jem, as well as the new saltpetre works lately erected by the Bey, are all built of stone taken from the amphitheatre. The method of extracting the saltpetre from the earth through which it is disseminated, is simple. The earth, brought on the backs of camels and asses from the extensive beds in the

neighbourhood, is placed in open tanks, and pressed down, to prevent the water poured upon it from running through too quickly. The saltpetre is carried off in solution into large coppers, placed at a lower level than the tanks, where evaporation is carried on until the liquid is sufficiently concentrated to crystallize on cooling. About thirty-five tons is the annual produce of the works at El Jem, and the whole is used in the government powder-mills in the kasbah of Tunis.

Previous to our departure, on the afternoon of the 25th, we practised with great success as medical men, the basis of our fame being the cures effected upon Solyman, who had had a bilious attack from over eating and getting drunk at Susa, and old Baba Jebb who was really ill, from the unaccustomed fatigue of the journey. The most serious case was that of a young man, who had received a few days previously a musket ball through the leg ; but as the bone was uninjured, he would soon recover if he followed the directions we gave. His father, a venerable old man, was waiting at the outskirts of the village and stopped us as we rode out, to kiss our hands in token of his gratitude.

From the summit of a ridge to the westward we had a last view of the amphitheatre, and leaving behind us the most magnificent memorial of the Roman empire in Africa that time has spared, we set out for Kairouan, where we hoped to arrive the following evening. Towards sunset we reached a douar of the Suehs, the most wealthy tribe in the plain of Kairouan ; their Sheick, Hassan Jellooli, being a younger brother of the Kaid of Sfax.

This evening we had no sinecure, for besides Baba Jebb, who nearly fainted when he was taken off his horse, we had a regular succession of patients, till dark. Not that all were ill, for many had nothing the matter with them, but were only anxious to get medicine in case they should be so ; these last would soon have swallowed the whole of our slender stock of physic, so all that could be done was to look at their tongues (a proceeding of which they were rather suspicious), feel their pulses, and retire into a corner for a consultation, leaving the would-be patient rather nervous at the solemnity of the whole affair, and then administering a couple of bread pills rolled in soda ; these he had to take in the presence of the assembled

crowd, the Arabs composing which, seated three or four deep in front of the tent, were looking on with the most edifying gravity. To those who were really ill we afforded what relief we could ; for it would have been but an ungrateful return for their hospitality to have deceived them. In the morning Baba Jebb was better, although at one moment the fever had attained such a height that I was on the point of bleeding him ; we wished to leave him behind, but he would not consent, and trusting for his recovery to the halt we intended making at Kairouan, we allowed him to proceed.

Whilst our horses were being saddled and the sembeels packed, the Sheick, observing that my attention was attracted by the noise of many voices, issuing from a tent next our own, took me by the wrist, led me to the front of the tent, and pointed out the boys of the tribe at school, seated in a circle round an old man, and each repeating his lesson with a loud voice. Every douar has its schoolmaster, and education, as far as being able to write, and to read the Koran, is almost universal amongst the Arabs, but beyond this they seldom go.

Part of the plain, over which we rode today for ten hours, was dotted with low bushes and small clumps of thorny brushwood, which frequently bore the singular appearance of growing on a patch of snow, from the ground beneath being covered to the depth of several inches with thousands of white snail shells. During the morning we passed several wells, or rather reservoirs, with narrow mouths, excavated in the sandstone rock, to collect and preserve rain-water throughout the summer months. They owe their origin to the charity of a pious pilgrim, who, returning from Kairouan, found on this spot the bodies of an entire family who had perished from thirst, and who caused these wells to be dug for the benefit of all future pilgrims and travellers.

For hours we encountered neither man, horse, nor camel, yet the vast plain was full of life; the ground was pierced with the burrows of the jerd; black-coated, hard-working beetles, walking backwards, were with their hind legs rolling towards their dwellings large balls of dung, much bigger than themselves; hundreds of lively, bright-eyed lizards, were playing among the tufts of grass, and a tortoise crossed our path

with creeping pace, as if oppressed with the burden of its variegated shell. The partridges, now breeding, ran for shelter to the bushes as we approached ; quails rose under our horses' feet ; the golden plumage of the yamounnas* glanced in the sunbeams, as, in company with a flight of swallows, they skimmed through the air in chase of insects ; three or four varieties of smaller birds were twittering in the bushes and a dozen kites, which had just finished picking the bones of a dead camel, were circling high in air in quest of other carrion.

We halted for an hour at a spring near which were some insignificant ruins, and towards the afternoon crossed the nearly dried-up stream of the Oued el Zeroud, which falls into the lake of Kairouan, an extensive sheet of water to the eastward, and shortly afterwards came in sight of the Holy city, the lofty tower of the grand mosque being visible for many miles around. As we drew near the city a hamba was sent forward to announce our arrival, and, after waiting for a short time in an olive grove, a quarter

* The common bee-eater.—*Merops apiastre*.

of a mile from the walls, Sidi Hammouda, the acting Kaiya, rode out to meet us, and, placing himself between us, we entered Kairouan, the fourth city in order of sanctity in the Mahometan world, and where a Christian or a Jew would meet, unless protected, as we were, by the especial order of the Bey for our admittance, and by the presence of the Kaiya, a certain death at the hands of the fanatic inhabitants. During our stay we were lodged in what the mameluke called the Bey's palace, an immense building not far from the grand mosque ; a guard was placed in the doorway leading to the court, servants were in attendance, the divan was furnished with silk and satin coverlets, and an abundance of well-cooked dishes were supplied at every meal.

CHAPTER VII.

Kairouan—Its history and sanctity—The prophet's barber—
The Kaiyas of Kairouan—Female fury—The grand mosque
—Its size and magnificence—Miraculous pillars—Sidi Abdallah and Solyman attempt the passage—Population and trade—Fanaticism—Leave Kairouan—Pilgrim—Mirage—Zouwan.

KAIROUAN was founded, A. D. 669, by Okbah, the conqueror of Africa, as a point from which to prepare for new conquests, and as a place of refuge in case of a reverse. For three centuries it remained the western capital of Islamism, and was famed as the seat of science, of religion, and of learning ; but after the removal of the Fatimite dynasty to Cairo, A. D. 973, although retaining all the odour of sanctity, it gradually sunk in importance to its present rank of the second city in the Regency of Tunis. The high degree of veneration in which Kairouan is held, is owing to the circumstance that Abu

Zemhat Elbalawy, a favourite disciple and the barber of the prophet, lies buried within the walls. The holding of the latter office would seem to point him out as a tried and trusted friend; but as Mahomet was shaved only twice in his life, the appointment must have been a sinecure.

The government of Kairouan has been, for many generations, hereditary in the family of the present Kaiya, Sidi Othman el Marabut, who having been struck with paralysis, is represented by his son. Formerly the Kaiyas possessed much greater power than they do at present; although always subjects to the Bey in name, they were strong enough to set their sovereigns at defiance. Even now they are rarely interfered with in the management of their own territory.

After breakfast, on the morning succeeding our arrival, we received a visit from the young Kaiya, who appointed two of his officers to attend us in our walks through the city. Our first object was the principal mosque, and on our way thither we met with a specimen of the feelings with which our visit was regarded. Turning a corner suddenly, we encountered two women of the lower class, the elder

of whom seemed inclined to run, but the younger, amazed at our appearance, stood, for a second, motionless in the narrow street, and, allowing her veil to drop, regarded us with a mingled expression of horror and disgust. Her attitude was magnificent—drawing herself up to her full height, her dark eyes flashing with rage, and impelled by the same feeling with which we would crush a noxious reptile, she raised her hands and rushed upon me like a fury, when the officer seized her uplifted arm, jerked her round with little ceremony, and led her cursing down the street.

The mosque, situated in the south-eastern corner of the city, has no external beauty, when seen from the open space around it; for the courts, domes, and tower, are enclosed within a high wall, strengthened by buttresses, and concealing the whole. There are ten entrances, one of which is now walled up, and the edifice, oblong in form, lies east and west, one hundred and eighty paces by ninety-five, as nearly as I could step it; any attempt to make a more exact measurement would probably have led to a serious riot. The best view is obtained from the mounds of earth, the refuse of the saltpetre works

outside the Bab el Kokh, the south gate of the city. A square tower, of three stories in height, surmounted by a dome, forms the centre of the mosque, and seven or eight melon-shaped cupolas, only two of which are of any size, rise from various parts of the building.

The interior, to which nothing would have induced them to admit us, must, from the description of the officers who accompanied us, have been magnificent, even after making all due allowances for the usual exaggeration. The great hall, near the principal entrance, they described as of surpassing splendour,—the pavement of the most precious marbles, and the walls lined with the same material; hundreds of antique columns, the spoil alike of heathen temple, Christian church, and Roman palace, support the roof; and fifty enormous lustres, each of a hundred and fifty lights, illuminate the hall on great anniversaries. The relics preserved here, and which are regarded by all Mahometans with veneration and awe, are the arms of several of the disciples and companions of the prophet, the conquerors of Africa. Protected by strong iron gratings

these occupy a shrine, to reach which it is usual to pass between three miraculous pillars, placed near each other, in a triangle. To a true believer, whatever may be his size, the pillars offer no impediment; but to a man, who either from his want of faith, or from his wicked life, is not looked upon by the prophet with favour, they form an impassible barrier;—“Let him be,” said our guide, holding up his little finger, “no bigger than this; it has even happened, that faithless sinners, who had sufficient nerve to make the attempt without repentance, have been squeezed to death, or dreadfully injured, by the columns closing upon them.”

We were much amused by the account of the visit of Sidi Abdallah and Solyman to the mosque, about six weeks previously. The former, who leads a very regular life, and never misses his prayers, first tried to pass between the pillars, but, being a stout man, stuck fast and failed. Nothing dismayed at this, Solyman, a good-natured, dare-devil, drunken fellow, made the attempt, he tried every way, backwards, forwards, and sideways, but all in vain, until, struck by a bright idea, he stripped to his linen drawers, and,

inserting himself head foremost, wriggled through in safety to the other side; aided equally by the prophet and a friend, the former doubtless relenting at the sight of his perseverance, and the latter applying a vigorous shove to the most substantial portion of his person, which formed the chief obstacle to his passage. Upon the strength of the sanctity thus acquired, he has since made a point of drinking his two bottles of wine, whenever he can obtain them, in place of one.

The ignorant, and the lower orders, firmly believe in the power of these pillars, and very many never dare to make the trial, for fear of the consequences ; but the educated Mahometans, although they revere the relics of the holy disciples of the prophet, laugh at the idea of the three miraculous pillars. The courts of the mosque are surrounded with arcades, supported by clusters of marble, and granite columns, and the numerous fountains are supplied from a large cistern under the great tower. Besides the grand mosque, within and around the city are many others.

The streets of Kairouan are well built and clean ; the city, nearly square, is surrounded by a lofty wall, having the kasbah at one of

its angles, whilst on the northern side are some modern fortifications, constructed after the European manner. The population is estimated at forty-five thousand ; and the principal trade of the city is in boots and slippers, the yellow leather of which they are made, and which is here manufactured, being famous throughout Northern Africa and the Turkish empire, for the brightness and durability of its colour, which, it is said, cannot be produced elsewhere in the same perfection.

In our perambulations through the sooks and streets, we encountered a sufficiency of black looks, and some abuse ; but, in the evening, when on our way home, a crowd collected in our rear, and as we passed the copious spring that supplies the city, Lord Feilding received a violent blow from a stone on the back of his head, which caused him to stagger. On our facing about, the majority of the crowd ran off ; and the Kaiya's officers in advance, not knowing the individual who had thrown the stone, thrashed the four nearest bystanders instead, which answered every purpose just as well.

In the environs of the city, the prickly

pear is planted to a considerable extent, as it requires no water, and the only labour necessary is occasionally to clear the ground about its roots. The fruit, which it bears in immense quantities, forms the chief summer food of the people, and camels are exceedingly fond of the leaves, the strong, needle-like thorns seeming to act upon their leathern palates as an agreeable stimulus. The cactus is regularly planted in all parts of Tunis and Algeria where the climate is suitable, not only for fences, but also for the sake of its fruit.

At six o'clock on the morning of the 28th, we took leave of Sidi Hammouda, who had come to our house at day-break to see us off in safety, and left the Holy City by the Bab el Tunis, with our escort increased by four of the Kaiya's armed horsemen. We were much gratified both with our visit to a city so seldom seen by Christians, and with the unexpected freedom with which we were permitted to wander about. The fanaticism of the populace has either cooled down considerably within the last few years, or the daily increasing strength of the government is able to control it; this latter being most probably

the case, for, whilst we were treated with the greatest consideration by the authorities and the respectable inhabitants, the trifling incidents I have already related, and which have been mentioned, not as occurrences of grave import, but to shew the temper of the people, indicate that their religious zeal is not weakened, but only curbed by strong authority.

I believe that we were the seventh party of Christians that had ever entered the city, and the very first who had been permitted to sleep within the walls ; the few previous travellers having been lodged in a country-house of the Kaiya's, a mile distant. On our return to Tunis, we heard that the reception we met with at Kairouan, was owing, not alone to the Bey's "amer," which we carried with us, but to his orders conveyed to the Kaiya by a special messenger.

Our route now lay across the most sterile portion of the barren plain of Kairouan ; and after a ride of two hours and a quarter, we crossed a brackish stream, over which was an ancient bridge, and near it to the right, a spring of clear fresh water, issuing from the face of a gentle slope. As we advanced northwards, the blue range of the

Ussulat mountains to the westward, grew more distinct as they swept round towards the Zouwan, the well-known crest of which arose sharp and clear against the distant horizon. Our Kairouan escort pointed out the spot, as we passed it, where, last summer, a Shawsh and six men, who were taking a sum of money to Tunis, were attacked by a robber tribe, and all killed except one, whose life was saved by the speed of his horse. It was on account of this occurrence that the Kaiya had strengthened our escort.

In the course of an hour, we had encountered several small flights of locusts, the advanced guard as it afterwards proved, of the most destructive flight that had visited Africa for many years.

A pilgrim, on his return from Mecca to his home, near Constantine, asked leave to join us. He had been absent a year and a half from his tribe. The vessel in which he had embarked at Algiers for Alexandria, with its freight of pilgrims, had touched at Malta, which our Hadji, although during the time in quarantine, described as a perfect paradise ; and, mistaking it for part of England, was surprised that we could leave

such a country to come to Africa, where there was neither fruit or wine. After the successful performance of his pilgrimage, he started from Mecca to return on foot, truly a most adventurous undertaking. The journey had already occupied five months ; and, clothed in rags as we now saw him, with a small bag of the coarsest provisions, and a water-skin slung upon his back, he had traversed part of Arabia and Egypt, crossed the Lybian desert and the whole width of Tripoli ; and having performed the last of his religious duties at Kairouan, considered his travels at an end. His strength and his spirits seemed inexhaustible ; the slow pace of the horses was irksome to him, and hour after hour, he told story after story of the wonders he had witnessed in the east. With our people he soon became a favourite, and we gave him permission to remain with us until we arrived in Algeria.

For three or four miles the strata of the sandstone rock rose a few feet above the surface of the plain, and, running in a straight line on either side of the track, so closely resembled the ruins of a wall, that we were more than once deceived by it. The

heat now grew intense ; there was a dead calm ; the naked surface of the sandy plain glowed like a furnace ; and each of us, closely wrapped in his berrous, plodded silently along, under the burning rays of the sun, now approaching the meridian. At eleven o'clock, greatly to the relief of man and horse, we reached a spring of fresh water, rising in the plain, and, throwing ourselves on the ground, thrust our heads into a stunted bush a foot or two high, glad to have obtained even so sorry a shelter from the scorching heat. The thermometer, well protected from the sun, marked ninety-nine degrees, whilst the temperature of the running water was seventy-three degrees.

Resuming our route, and keeping more towards the coast, we rode along the base of a range of undulating hillocks on our right. To the left, the mirage was displaying the magic wonders of its fairy scenery ; bright specks swelled imperceptibly into lakes, and the lakes became a sea ; a continent dissolved beneath the eye into islands, now bare, now covered to the water's edge with waving woods ; and, floating on the glittering surface of the mimic ocean, these again divided

into a thousand islets, or, re-uniting, appeared to lay the foundations of another land. We had often witnessed the mirage before, but never in the perfection in which it appeared on this day. Its extreme beauty was probably owing, in addition to the usual causes, to the perfect level of the plain, and the vicinity of the mountains to the westward.

Towards evening, we circled round the base of the mountain range that extends from Zouwan to near the sebkah el Jereebah, which we had passed on our road to Hergla, and halted for the night, at half-past six, with a tribe whose chief had made the first step towards civilization, by building in the centre of the pasturage belonging to his tribe, for his own occasional residence, a small house. He is very proud of his stone and lime habitation, but, for living in, he much prefers a tent. We had intended starting next morning for Zouwan at three o'clock, but no one awoke in time, so that it was past five when we set forward.

Passing under the picturesquely situated village of Takroona, perched on the flat summit of a hill, we followed a northwesterly direction through the mountains; the valleys,

rocks, and wooded glens, appearing more beautiful than usual, after the sameness of the country we had lately traversed. For the greater part of the distance we kept the track of a Roman road, passing the fragments of several ancient mile-stones, so worn and defaced that only detached figures and letters could be made out. Judging from the numerous ruins, these mountains must have been densely populated, for we saw, in the space of a few miles, the remains of three considerable towns.

At noon we arrived at Zouwan, and, the Sheick being in prison at Tunis, we were lodged in the house of a wealthy Jew, who, for a wonder, had a tolerably clean room to offer us.

CHAPTER VIII.

Zouwan—Its spring and temple—Untried adventure—Shashahs—New quarters—Ascent of the mountain—Ruins of Oudena—The great aqueduct—Mahmudiah—Locusts—Return to Tunis—Plans—Farewell interview with the Bey—Court of Justice—Ancient and modern costume—“Chattars”—Interior of the Bardo—Young courtiers—The Bey's stud—Manuba palace—Barracks—Sidi Tolhah—An Arabic ode—The Kasbah—Powder mills—Public buildings of Tunis—Statistics of the Regency—The Bey—Abolition of slavery—Government.

THE situation of Zouwan is extremely beautiful. The town, surrounded by gardens and groves of magnificent trees, stands on the lower slope of the mountain, the rugged peaks of which rise precipitously from the rich bed of verdure at its base. The arched gateway of the ancient city, with its sculptured key-stone and vacant niches,* still forms the

* The devices on the key-stone are a ram's head, over it a wreath of leaves around the word Auxilio; the whole surmounted by the letter A, of a large size.

entrance of the modern town. Higher up the acclivity lie the tombs of many a generation ; clear streams pour down the mountain's side, while picturesquely placed around the town and embosomed in trees, the snow-white domes of several marabouts are seen.

Two miles to the westward springs the fountain of Zouwan, whose ever-flowing stream was once conveyed by the great aqueduct, through hills and over valleys, a distance of fifty miles, to Carthage. Care seems to have been taken to protect and adorn the source in a manner worthy of the great city which the spring supplied. The basin within which the waters rise, is in the singular form of two intersecting ovals ; on either hand a flight of steps leads, under an arch, to a terrace immediately behind it, where are the ruins of an extensive temple, with a central shrine, and arcades, open to the interior and containing niches, which probably were once filled with statues of the presiding water nymphs.

Overhanging the basin is an aged tree, whose gnarled roots, forcing their way between the loosened stones, have formed an arched entrance to a narrow passage in the

earth, which, according to tradition, penetrates into the heart of the mountain, where, guarded by serpents, the splendid armour of the ancient rulers of the country has lain concealed for ages. As yet no person has had the courage to attempt such an adventure as the obtaining ingress to this mysterious armoury, and from the appearance of the opening, which must be entered upon the hands and knees, it is very likely that a snake or two might be encountered within. In all probability, if it lead anywhere, it is to a vault under the foundations of the temple, and as it would have taken several days to clear the passage sufficiently to make it accessible, even on all fours, we did not attempt to unravel the mystery, and it still remains a virgin enterprise for more ambitious travellers.

The water of the spring is icy cold, clear as crystal, and never-failing; it runs in a narrow channel towards the town, and, being joined in its progress by other small streams, is the cause of the exuberant fertility of Zouwan. One of these small streams is that in which the shasheahs, or red caps, worn almost universally throughout Turkey, Egypt, and

the Levant, are dipped. Principally manufactured in Tunis, they are sent to Zouwan to receive the red colour so celebrated for its richness and permanency—qualities imparted to it by frequent washings in the running water of this spring. Many attempts have been made to produce the same colour elsewhere, by following precisely the same process, but they have all failed.

The inhabitants, however, make no secret of their method of dyeing, using cochineal, with alum as a mordaunt, and they refer their success entirely to the peculiar virtues of the water of the spring. The washing is carried on in small enclosures, formed in the bed of the stream by driving stakes in a circle, an inch or so apart, so as to permit the current to pass freely, whilst the shasheahs, placed in a coarse sack, are turned and trampled upon by the feet of the workmen. The finer shasheahs are rather expensive, varying in price, according to quality, from fifteen to thirty piastres each. Zouwan contains about eight thousand inhabitants, and this prosperous trade, which affords employment to a large portion of the population, gives it also a little livelier aspect than

is usually seen in the second-rate towns of the interior.

On our return, in the evening, we found Mr. Reade and an officer of H. M. Ship Beacon, who had ridden over from Tunis to meet us, and our Jewish quarters not being sufficiently large to contain the party, we removed to the house of an old acquaintance of Mr. Reade's, rather to the inconvenience of the inmates, who had to vacate their quarters in such a hurry that a box full of clothes, and several minor accessories of the female toilette, including a plentiful supply of rouge, and of black paint for the eyelids, were left behind for our especial edification.

The whole of the next day we devoted to the mountain, and as the first half of the ascent may be made on horseback, we set forth at an early hour, mounted on three wretched ponies and a mule, furnished by the town. The road lay along the base of the mountain, by winding lanes between gardens hedged in by a luxuriant growth of flowering shrubs and tangled underwood, from which, side by side with the spreading branches of the poplar and the plane, rise the lofty palm and the dark spires of the

cypress, forming a mass of foliage, twined with wreathing creepers, and impervious to the sun, save where through some opening in the trees a stream of light darts across the road and plays on the rippling surface of a brook that overflows the path. Leaving the ruined temple of the spring to the left, the track wound upwards, and in two hours and a half we arrived at a marabout, built on a grassy shoulder of the mountain, where we left our horses, and commenced the real ascent of the Zouwan.

The peak nearest the town, which we had till now been skirting, appears from thence to be the higher of the two, but it is in reality several hundred feet lower than that to the westward, which we were about to climb. These two peaks are connected by a ridge of rocks which forms, from a distance, one of the most peculiar features of the mountain. Crossing the ravine lying between the marabout and the summit, we climbed the almost perpendicular face of the rock, and loitering on the way, tempted by the splendid prospect, and by the wild flowers blossoming in every crevice, it was past mid-day when we stood upon the

highest point of the Zouwan. Looking down on Nature's map unrolled beneath us, no sameness, even of grandeur, palled the eye—sea, plain, and mountain, lay spread around, undimmed by mist and bathed in sunshine. There was Tunis with its encircling forts, its lakes and bay ; the wide sweep of the Gulf of Hammamet ; the vast plain, with the faint outline of the southern hills ; and, stretching inland in undistinguishable confusion, range rose beyond range of lofty mountains, their various tints distinct, yet blending softly as they receded to the horizon ; whilst at our feet the deep ravines, bare rocks, and craggy peaks of the Zouwan, formed a wild foreground to the panoramic view.

Close to the summit, and divided from it only by a narrow chasm, rises a twin peak, of nearly the same elevation, and from which, on the southern side, an almost unbroken precipice descends into the plain. The summit itself was covered with tufts of delicately small blue flowers, and gathering a handful, as a memorial, though but a fading one, of the day, we descended to the marabout, where, under the shade of a clump of trees, we dined. Near this marabout is an enor-

mous pit, intended as a snow-well for the Bey, but, faulty in construction, it is a failure. Birds of prey breed on the mountain in great numbers, and seldom were there fewer than ten or a dozen eagles and vultures in sight at any moment during the day. Wild boars, wolves, and jackals abound, and as we returned homewards an hyena burst from a thicket close to the party. The sun had set in splendour before we reached the temple of the spring, and the shades of evening fell darkly around us as we re-entered the town.

On the morning of the first of May we left Zouwan for Tunis, a distance of about forty English miles. After crossing a low range of hills we left the road and cantered over the plain to the right, to visit Oudena, a small village of half a dozen huts, built amid the ruins of the ancient Uthina. Lying on the crest and slope of a height overlooking the plain, are the remains of several large buildings, an aqueduct, theatre, &c., together with the cisterns, which are in a nearly perfect state of preservation, and through which we rode, descending from the surface of the ground by a sloping path to the level of their

floor, and passing from one cistern to another by means of arches in the party walls, without dismounting. They are used by the inhabitants as store-houses and stables for their flocks. Taking them altogether, the ruins of Uthina are more extensive than those of any other ancient city we had as yet seen in the Regency.

To the left of the Tunis road, a long line of arches stretches northwards across the plain, a portion of the magnificent aqueduct that conveyed the waters of the Zouwan a course of fifty miles, to Carthage. Its height varies greatly, according to the inequalities of the country, but, at one point, it rises to the elevation of ninety feet. Where the water-course lies beneath the surface, it is to be traced by circular shafts of masonry, rising at intervals above the ground, formed, probably, not only for ventilation, but to allow of repairs being executed. Originally constructed by the Carthaginians, the aqueduct has been at various times repaired by their successors, in the style of architecture prevalent at the period, and the different restorations are easily distinguishable from each other both as to workmanship and materials. The

date of its final destruction has not been recorded. Numbers of small hawks, and blue jays, of brilliant plumage, build upon the ruins, and, as we passed, the flocks belonging to a small douar, pitched almost beneath the arches, were scattered over the grassy plain.

After our mid-day halt at the aqueduct, we continued our course along the plain, crossed the Mileeana, and, on the rising ground beyond, passed the Mahmudiah, a country palace belonging to the Bey, to which extensive barracks are attached. Great improvements have lately been made, and others are in progress, in this neighbourhood, by order of the Bey. Large tracts of land have been taken in from the plain, regularly enclosed with fences, and many acres planted with olives. The soil, though light, seemed fertile, and the crops of grain upon the ground promised a plentiful return for the slight labour bestowed upon them, should they escape the locusts, large flights of which had been arriving from the south and east for several days, and had already done much mischief. Crossing the sandy plain, and leaving the salt lake on our left, we passed under the forts on the heights around the

city, and entering Tunis at six o'clock, we were received by our kind friends at the consulate with a hearty welcome.

The next few days were fully occupied in making the necessary arrangements for our departure, in visiting those parts of the city which we had only cursorily seen, and in having a farewell interview with the Bey. We now finally determined to attempt the inland route from Tunis to Bôna, by way of Keff, instead of that by Bedja and La Calle, the road hitherto followed by the few Europeans who have travelled by land from one country to the other, both as being the shortest and the most secure. We were anxious not only to see the numerous objects of interest lying in the vicinity of the Majerdah, the principal river of the Regency, but also to visit the tribes occupying the mountains that form the disputed boundaries of Algeria and Tunis, and who, from their local position, are almost independent of either government. In this plan there was perhaps some little risk to be run, owing to the jealousy with which Europeans are regarded, but we trusted to the Bey's Amers to pass us on from tribe to tribe, and for our safety, to our having little

with us to excite cupidity, to our being well armed, and, above all, to the fact of our being English, the mere word “Ingleese” having always a marked effect upon the manner of our reception by the tribes.

On the morning of the third, we repaired to the Bardo, to take leave of the Bey. He received us in the Hall of Justice, where he was employed in his daily task of sitting for three or four hours to determine causes. During our interview, which did not last long, he asked several questions, as to whether we had been gratified with what we had seen, &c., we thanked his highness for the great kindness he had shown to us, and, before we took our leave, requested permission to witness the method of administering justice.

The court is open to the lowest as well as the highest, and, as before mentioned, each party pleads his own cause, or defends himself, with the utmost freedom. As the prisoners or witnesses came forward, one by one, two officers of the court held them by their shoulders, during the time they were being examined by the Bey. There were no cases of interest or importance among those we heard decided ; two were disputed debts,

a third was the case of a soldier who had been caught in the act of desertion, and the fourth was that of an old man accused of stabbing. This latter case was adjourned, in the absence of a witness for the defence. The punishment of death is but rarely inflicted, very seldom for any other crimes save those of rebellion or murder. The other penalties of the law are various terms of imprisonment, the galleys, fines, and the bastinado.

Sir Thomas Reade described the appearance of the Tunisian court previous to the introduction of the European costume, as splendid in the extreme; loose robes and garments covered with lace and embroidery and glittering with jewels, have, however, now given place to trousers and frock-coats, with the universal shasheah, seen alike on the head of the private soldier and the Bey. The only officials who retain the ancient costume are the Chattars, who, in crimson and gold, are always about the person of the Bey when he appears in public. Originally appointed from Constantinople, whilst the rulers of Tunis were subject to the Porte, their duty consisted in the singular one of

putting the Bey to death, whenever they should receive the Sultan's orders to that effect. In the course of time their office fell into abeyance, and they became merely state attendants at the Bardo, retaining their original designation and uniform, which latter included a splendid girdle, worn round the waist, and in which was kept the fatal bow-string.

Having expressed a wish to see the interior of the Kasbah, the Manuba palace, and the Bardo, orders were given that the two former should be opened for our inspection, and a strikingly handsome young officer, the Bey's favourite aid-de-camp, was sent to conduct us over the latter. The state saloon, in which we had been received at our first interview, is fitted up with great splendour ; the furniture and mirrors are of Parisian manufacture, and the walls encrusted with slabs of the rarest marbles, from the ruins of Carthage and Utica. The ceiling has a singularly rich appearance ; the ground, formed of mirrors, being overlaid with gilt arabesque fret-work. The Bey's private apartments,—with the exception of an immense saloon, designed by the Bey himself,

and erected in the short space of forty days,— are small and plainly, yet handsomely fitted up, and but for some frightful daubs of pictures and a number of trumpery French engravings, all would be in very good taste. In the Bey's bed-room, and the adjoining apartment, are hung several portraits of Her Majesty, Louis Philippe, the Sultan, and other crowned heads, together with portraits of himself and some members of his family. Three or four large ornamental clocks are placed about the rooms, and a well-thumbed terrestrial globe stands on one of the tables. From a sort of gallery, the ends and one side of which were glazed, like a conservatory, a magnificent view of the environs of Tunis is obtained, and, gaily decorated with rich silk hangings and furniture, it must be a delightful lounging place in the cool summer evenings.

In one of the interior courts we stopped to speak to two very fine little boys, nephews to the Bey, and sons of the Saheb el Taba. The little fellows were not in the least shy, and although the elder was not more than seven or eight years of age, they were both dressed, like the rest of the persons at court,

in trousers and little green frock-coats, buttoned tight up to the throat. They wore the insignia of the Tunisian order, in diamonds, round their necks, and little shasheahs, with large blue tassels, on their heads.

The stables are sheds, open at the rear towards the courts ; they were nearly empty, most of the horses standing picketed in rows on the plain, in front of the Bardo. There were no animals of any great value amongst them, and I was rather disappointed with the specimens of the Bey's stud that came under my notice. According to a fashion prevalent among the Moors, several white horses had three of their legs, and the mark as of a saddle-cloth on their backs, stained of a bright orange colour, with henna. From one of the legs being left of its natural colour this beautifying process has a still more singular effect, but to dye all four is considered very unlucky.

From the Bardo we drove to the Manuba palace, a mile and a half distant. Uninhabited for a series of years, this beautiful building was suffered to fall into partial decay, and was only saved from total ruin by

being converted a few years ago into barracks for one of the Bey's two regiments of regular cavalry.

The great hall is famous for the beauty of its marbles, and the delicacy of the stucco-work, which is almost peculiar to Tunis. The upper parts of the walls, the vaulted ceiling, and the arches, have exactly the appearance of being covered with lace of the most delicate texture and intricate pattern, worked in white marble. The windows, small in size, and composed of stained glass of the most brilliant colours, were also filled with arabesque tracery of the same description. The general effect of these windows was good, but they appeared heavy when seen in the midst of the graceful fret-work on the walls. No expensive preparations are required to execute this work, called by the Moors "Muksheh hadeedah." A coat of plaster, double or treble the usual thickness, is laid on the wall; as it begins to set, the workman, taking the pattern, already drawn on paper, traces it on the smooth surface, and, whilst the plaster is still soft, cuts out the parts required, with a small sharp knife;

when dry it becomes nearly as hard as stone, and only a severe blow can injure it.

The colonel of the regiment insisted on accompanying us through the barracks. The two regiments, one of which is quartered here, each about nine hundred strong, are armed and equipped like European light cavalry, and their appearance is far more soldier-like than that of the infantry. I was much surprised to find the barracks scrupulously clean, the bedsteads, of iron, with the bedding neatly arranged, as were also their arms, kits, and saddlery, all of a fair quality and in very good order. We visited the different regimental workshops, where the soldiers are employed in making their own clothing, appointments, &c. In the armourer's shop were several carbines, of equal finish to the French models, and an ophicleide for the band was receiving the finishing touches.

The hospital was clean, airy, and comfortable, and was well supplied with medicines, which seemed to be really for use and not for shew only, as an hospital assistant, who had been educated in Italy, was engaged in

compounding some of them when we entered. The stabling, for nearly a thousand horses, is a shed, running round an oblong enclosure; the men are well mounted, and the horses, although there are few beauties amongst them, are hardy and serviceable. We examined every thing most minutely, and were much surprised to find the regimental economy so perfect, and, as our visit was quite unexpected, the messenger from the Bardo having entered the gate with us, we saw every thing in its every-day dress. After taking coffee in the colonel's quarters, we returned to Tunis.

One morning, in company with Mr. Richardson, whose name is so honourably known in connection with the philanthropic efforts he has made for the abolition of slavery, we visited Sidi Tolhah, a public notary of Tunis, a well educated man, and a poet of some local reputation. As a specimen of modern Arabic poetry, I insert a literal translation of one of his latest odes, which he had given to Mr. Richardson, and which is also curious inasmuch as it betrays that even whilst writing a poem in praise of the date-palm, its author,

a very pious, orthodox Mussulman, could not forbear introducing all the great dogmas of the Mahometan faith.

“Praise be to God !
God bless our Lord Mahomet, his family
and friends.

This is a poem eulogising the Palm.

“Lofty is the Palm, and widely spread are its branches, so that all may see it and be filled with admiration. The growth of its fruits begins like unto pearls, always increasing in beauty ; first, oh my brethren ! green as the emerald, after this it changes to a yellow immaturity, and then to a precious ripeness, with the unequalled sweetness of an honey-comb. Each date grows in matchless order, and ripens of a dark deep crimson hue, reddening like the ruby.*

“The fruit, placed by the might of God high upon the tree, hangs in magnificent bunches, glowing like burnished gold. Each bunch is a cluster of garnets, and each date, alternating like a string of pearls, is of a

* When the date begins to germ it is white, whilst immature it is yellow, and when ripe, of a beautiful red.

lovely saffron hue, to be gazed upon by all. God hath in an especial manner granted to Islamism, the Palm, the camel, and the Arabic tongue. In this language God has made known to the Arabs their religion, and it excels in the eloquence of its rhythm like a nicely poised balance. That the Koran, to which no other book can be compared, is written in this language, is an unquestionable proof of its beauty.

“ The Koran so far surpasses all other books that neither man nor demon can produce its like. All men, let their colour be white or yellow, black or red, are subjected beneath the light of the Koran’s laws. Islamism is spread and established throughout China, India, and the island of Ceylon ; also in Scinde, and Yaman, or Araby the blest. Besides, it is fixed at Hajaz and in Elhâram, the house of God, where he is worshipped, ‘ the holy of holies ’ which though it be far from us, is by our prayers brought near. This faith extends also in Araby of Arabia, in Egypt and in Syria, in Mossul and Kufat, in Bassorah and Aman of Western Arabia. In Bagdad and throughout the country of Persia, even to the confines of China where

Gog and Magog dwell, whose people have decided to embrace this, the only true religion. How blest are those warriors of God who have fought for this faith in the east and in the west—their felicity is divine ! Of a truth God has vouchsafed to them what he has denied to others, both in this world and in the next, in defiance of the devil.

“ Let God be praised, who has no equal, neither, oh ! my friends, is there any likeness of HIM. In contemplating his marvellous works, I am lost in an uninhabited desert, and, my friends and kindred not finding me, I am abandoned to despair. Examine the workmanship of the Palm, that you may learn the nature of God, who has no second ! From the earth with which God created man, he likewise created the Palm, therefore the Palm is our aunt. The flavour of the date is most delicious, and the form of the Palm most graceful ; and this is the manner in which it yields us fruits : you throw a stone at the palm when the time of yielding has arrived, and it in turn throws to you dates overflowing with sweets. Behold ! our aunt in her good works perpetually yielding us her fruit.

"Under the sheltering Palm, the Virgin Mary brought forth her son Jesus Christ, who by God's decree is made universal judge. This event took place in Bethlehem. There is no associate whatever with God! Hear this, and you will go the right way of faith. When Jesus was born, he said, 'I am the servant of God, I am the servant of the most Merciful.' This is a precept for those who do not understand that no one should call Jesus, Son of, or second to God. But God is God, and one God eternally, and all creatures are the slaves and the property of the Unique One. In the Koran God has declared to our Lord Mahomet, the 'seal or last' of the Prophets, that Jesus did not die, nor was he crucified, neither did the Jews kill him, but only crucified one like him between two robbers. These things are the religion of God—follow it, and you will be saved to-morrow (*i. e.* after death) and will inhabit the Paradise of little innocents. We believe in all that has been brought to us by our Lord Mahomet, the master of the two worlds* and

* The same expression, "The two worlds," occurs on Turkish coins, and signifies Asia and Africa, or the East and West.

of the family of Adam. He will be our intercessor on the day of general judgment, He will preserve us from all terrors, and save us from every evil."

On the eastern side of the city of Tunis stands the kasbah, which is entered from the place of execution, an open space of ground where the bodies of criminals used to be publicly exposed. The great archway, and the vaulted passages on either hand are decorated with stripes of black and red, and grotesque figures of animals, rudely painted in fresco ; several pieces of rusty armour are hung upon the walls, relics of the Spanish garrison that held the fortress in the days of Muley-Hassan and Charles V.

Within the walls, the defences are in ruins, and the chief use to which the kasbah is applied is that of a powder manufactory. We were conducted through the mills by an old Sicilian in charge of the works, who had served for many years in our navy during the war, and had been present in several of the actions that took place. The gunpowder is of a very inferior quality, soft, and badly granulated. In the method of manufacture,

there is nothing remarkable save the great carelessness of all parties concerned. They take the chance of an explosion very coolly, alleging, what is certainly an extraordinary fact, that there never has been an accident, and they dare say "please God" that there never will be one. Gunpowder is here a government monopoly, and none other is allowed to be manufactured throughout the Regency. Many, however, of the Arab tribes make a very inferior description for their own use, and nothing astonished them more than seeing the small quantity of powder with which we loaded, they being in the habit of charging their own guns by the handful. The Bey has also established a tannery, and a manufactory of military camp equipage, within the kasbah.

Rising amidst a mass of ruins is the square tower of an ancient mosque, remarkable for the beauty of its external decoration, the lower part being covered with verses from the Koran, sculptured with freedom and delicacy, in flowing Kufic characters. From the walls, on which are mounted a few old guns, without carriages, there is an extensive view.

The other public buildings of Tunis worthy of notice are the new barracks, capable of

containing five thousand men ; the town palace of the Bey, a square mass of building seldom occupied, the residence, however, of Queen Caroline during her visit to Tunis. The principal mosque, that of the Olive-tree, is in the sooks, but the most magnificent is that erected thirty years since by the celebrated Saheb-el-taba Yousouf, in the suburbs, at the cost of 200,000/. After his execution, for conspiracy against the life of the Bey, the founder's body was publicly exposed in front of his own mosque. Near this are the baths, also built by Yousouf, the largest and best arranged in the city. Since the abolition of slavery, the slave-market, a small square court, with vaulted roof, and having rooms around where female slaves of the better class were kept, merely retains its name as a reminiscence of the purpose to which it was formerly appropriated.

The Regency of Tunis, upon a rough calculation, occupies an area of forty-five thousand square miles, with a population of two millions of inhabitants. The army, exclusive of the levy "*en masse*" of the Arab tribes, amounts to twenty thousand men, of whom a large proportion are disciplined after the

European manner. If necessary for the defence of the country, and especially if there were a chance of plunder, the Bey could bring from forty to fifty thousand Arabs into the field, but this force could only be used for temporary purposes.

The revenue of the Bey varies according to the state of the harvest, as it principally consists of a tenth of the produce, of every description, throughout the Regency. It is also increased by the profit from the extensive olive gardens, his private property, and he possesses a flock of thirty thousand camels, which are hired out at the rate of a piastre a month. Each of these camels is branded with the Bey's mark, and when one of them dies, the piece of skin bearing the brand is cut off and shewn to the proper officer, who replaces it with another camel. From these and a few other minor sources, the revenue, in a good year, will amount to nearly a million sterling, whilst after a bad harvest, it seldom reaches beyond from four to five hundred thousand pounds.

Since the accession of the present Bey, the first steps towards the improvement of the general condition of the country, have been

taken. As I have already mentioned, Ahmed is almost self-educated, and the greater credit ought to be given him for having, unassisted, except by the natural strength of his understanding, swept away many of the prejudices that may be said to have been born with him. A moral man in his mode of life, and attentive to the forms of his religion, he is no bigot, but, on the contrary, seeing the almost insuperable bar that fanaticism offers to the advancement of a semi-barbarous nation, he is endeavouring, slowly and cautiously, to weaken the religious intolerance of his subjects, inasmuch as it interferes with his government and his plans.

Many reforms are in progress, amongst which the most important are the measures that have been taken to restrain within proper bounds the power of the provincial Kaïds and other authorities, who formerly were the great oppressors of the people. Property has become generally more secure since the discontinuance of a system by which, upon the slightest pretexts, the Beys used to enrich themselves by the plunder of wealthy individuals. The army also has been considerably augmented, and its efficiency greatly increased

by the personal attention the Bey has paid to the newly-disciplined troops.

Still, the great event of his reign remains to be told. Of his own free will, without any external pressure, he has abolished slavery within the Tunisian dominions. To Sir Thomas Reade the merit of the first suggestion is entirely due, and it was also warmly taken up by Signor Raffo. When the subject was mentioned to the Bey, he at once expressed his own feelings of dislike to slavery, and only hesitated, to consider deliberately the safest method of proceeding with a measure which, unless cautiously handled, might produce serious consequences throughout the country. The means he took are characteristic of the man. His first step was to emancipate every slave that he possessed, which example was followed by all the principal officers about the Bardo, and by many others, by way of paying court to the Bey ; due notice was then given that, after April, 1841, the importation or exportation of slaves was rendered penal ; four months afterwards their sale was prohibited, and finally, after a certain date, all children of slave parents were to be considered as free-born.

From what has been stated above, I would not have it imagined that either the Bey or his system of government is perfect,—far from it; for, if something has been done to raise a country possessing in itself all the elements necessary for the happiness and prosperity of its inhabitants, from the depth to which it has been sunk by centuries of despotic oppression, barbaric ignorance, and the withering blight of a false religion, there is a wide field, upon which he has only just entered, still spread before the first ruler of Tunis who has emancipated himself from the trammels of ignorance and prejudice.

CHAPTER IX.

Departure from Tunis—Changes in our party—Aqueduct—The Majerdah—Tuburba—Theological dispute—Cloth-mill—Medjaz el Bab—The banks of the Majerdah—Locusts An omen of war—Testoor—The meeting of friends—Ruins of Tounga—Tubersook—Christian inscription—Ruins of Dugga—Magnificent temple—The Kaïd of Tubersook.

TAKING leave of our kind friends, whose house had been our home, and with whom we had passed so many agreeable days in the intervals of our travels, we left Tunis on the morning of the 5th of May.

Several changes had taken place in our party ; Baba Abdallah, another mameluke, had been sent instead of poor old Baba Jebb, who, as well as his comical little mare, were both dead beat with the fatigue of our southern expedition; and Hamet, a young man strikingly handsome, proud of his own good looks

and of the beauty of his horse, replaced Solyman, one of the Hambas, who had fallen ill the day after our return. As accidents might happen, or forced marches might be necessary, we procured a third baggage horse, and hired, in addition to Angelo, another Maltese servant. The rest of the party were the same as already described. We were furnished, as before, with amers to the Bey's authorities, and letters to the mountain tribes on the Algerine frontier.

Passing the Bardo and the Manuba barracks, we proceeded in a westerly direction over the plain, crossing the grand aqueduct, which here rises to its greatest elevation. It is much to be regretted that these magnificent ruins are disappearing day by day, their materials being taken as from a quarry, when required for the construction of new buildings ; we met, indeed, a long string of cars on their way to Tunis, laden with stones from the aqueduct. That part which has been considered as the work of the Romans, being entirely built of hewn stones, suffers the most from this practice for the whole of the materials are by degrees carried away,

whilst the Carthaginian portion, being composed internally of concrete, is only stripped of its external facing of masonry.

Thirteen miles from Tunis we crossed the Majerdah, by a handsome stone bridge at the village and mill of el Djedida. This river, the principal one of the Regency, is the Bagrada of the Romans, so often mentioned in ancient history. Following its course for a distance of five miles, we arrived at Tuburba, where we halted for the day. The town, small, dirty, and ruinous, contains nothing of interest. The surrounding country is rich in oil, corn, fruits, and pasture-land, and that it was so, was proved at supper by the lavish expenditure of oil in the cookery, the newly made little cake-like cheeses, and a kind of delicately flavoured lemon, not much larger than a walnut.

We already began to miss Baba Jebb's ever-flowing good humour, for his successor was wrangling with some one or other of the party throughout the whole journey. He made his debut in the evening, in a discussion with Clement, our new servant, to which our attention was at last attracted by the

increasing warmth of the parties, who had certainly chosen a singular subject for an untaught Maltese, a Christian but in name, and a renegade, to quarrel over. The debated point turned out to be, whether a poor man had any chance of going to heaven ; Clement averred that he had, whilst Baba Abdallah stoutly maintained the contrary, and wound up his argument by laying down the law most decidedly, that any person with plenty of money might go to heaven if he liked it, but that a poor man was sure to go to the devil, as he had no doubt Clement would do, sooner or later.

Next morning we made a circuit, to visit a cloth-mill lately established by the Bey, on the right bank of the Majerdah, a mile distant from Tuburba. Crossing the river by a modern bridge, erected a little below the ruined piers of one built by the Spaniards, and now converted into a mill dam, we were received with great civility, and conducted over the manufactory by a French gentleman in charge of the works.

Commenced only a year and a half ago, about two-thirds of the building as originally

planned, are finished, and the remainder will be speedily completed. The whole of the machinery is French, except the looms, which, sixty-two in number, are all of the simple construction used in the country, and worked by hand. The machinery is driven by a water-power equal to that of twelve horses, and which will shortly be increased to twenty. Four hundred men, women, and children, are at present employed, which number will be doubled when the works come into full operation. The wages of these people are low, from fourpence to sixpence a day each, but considering the relative prices of food, this sum is equal to the wages of the continental operative. The country people are apt scholars, and the facility with which even old men acquire skill in perfectly new processes, shews the manufacturing capabilities lying dormant in the country. At present the great fault of the people is indolence: constant watching is necessary to keep them at work, and this forms the principal occupation of the six Europeans employed in the establishment.

The cloth manufactured is strong, and well adapted for army clothing, to supply

which from the produce of the country, and by home labour, was one of the Bey's chief inducements to establish the works. The fleece of the Barbary sheep is thick, but coarse, and much extra labour is occasioned by the excessively dirty state of the wool. In one of the warehouses there was a quantity of camel's hair, which was about to be spun and woven, as an experiment, but so carelessly had the animals been clipped, that to separate the strong hairs of the mane and neck that had been mixed with the finer, would cause an expense equalling alone the centire cost of the rest of the process.

For the manufacture of the cloth required by the officers, a small quantity of Spanish wool has been imported. The Bey takes a great personal interest in the works, having visited them himself, and, judging from the commencement, there would seem to be little doubt that the enterprise will be crowned with success.

Riding on over an undulating country, enlivened by patches of cultivation, we passed through the village of Kreech el Oued, placed near the confluence of a small stream with

the Majerdah, and, at noon, we arrived at Medjez el Bab, where we remained for two hours. Prettily situated, at the distance of a furlong from the river, over which is thrown a modern bridge, Medjez el Bab contains the usual antiquities to be found in almost every town in the Regency, such as pillars, fragments of inscriptions, &c. Near the bridge stands, upon a massive square base, a triumphal arch, the key-stones on either side bearing a coarsely sculptured bust ; from the fondations near, it would appear that it stood originally at the end of a bridge, the Majerdah having formerly passed close under the site of the modern town.

The direct road to Testoor lies, for the first half of the distance, on the left bank of the river, which we should then have had to ford, but the flood rendering the stream impassable, we were forced to follow that on the right, which is a third longer. For two hours we scrambled along the steep and precipitous bank, worn by the winter torrents into deep ravines,, several of which we had to skirt for a considerable distance, in order to find a spot available for crossing. The

scenery was wild and pretty, with views varying as we alternately ascended and descended the sides of the water courses, now dry. We caught occasional glimpses of the river, with the opposite plain, bounded by a range of hills gradually increasing in elevation as they extended southward.

For five miles we rode through an immense flight of locusts ; the earth was covered with them in myriads, and on the bottom and banks of the deepest ravine we crossed, they lay so thick, that many were crushed beneath our horses' feet at every step. Wherever they had alighted, the vegetation was cut down to the ground, hardly a blade of herbage escapes, and the damage they cause is incalculable.

They were more than usually numerous this year, and the Moors and Arabs, more especially in Algeria, considered their great number as portending a season of war or pestilence, and certainly the omen has this time proved a true one, for the war that commenced in June, and which has continued to rage unabated up to the present moment, has been the most bloody that the Arabs have as yet experienced.

The flight of the locusts is heavy, and, almost altogether at the mercy of the wind and unable to direct their course, they often flew with considerable impetus against our horses and ourselves. When in motion, and driven by the breeze in an oblique direction, their bodies shining in the sun, the air has the appearance of being filled with flakes of yellow snow. Destructive as they are to the country, they are not entirely useless, for great quantities of them are eaten, without further preparation than being lightly fried in oil, and having afterwards the wings and saw-like legs plucked off. In Tunis, at the time we left, large heaps of locusts were exposed for sale in the streets, which was also the case in all the towns on the road; we tasted them, and found their flavour less disagreeable than their appearance.

We passed several insignificant remains, and the village of Slookeeah, near the ford by which we should have crossed, and at half past five arrived at Testoor, where we were hospitably received. Surrounded by walls, which, except near the gates, are in ruins, and standing on the right bank of the Majerdah, Testoor is the ancient

Colonia Bisica Lucana, and, in various parts of the town, in the walls and in the private houses, are several inscriptions of which we took copies; none of them however, are of sufficient general interest to render their insertion desirable. Ruins of a bridge over the river are also to be seen.

We had frequently witnessed, and had been amused at the excessive politeness exhibited in the salutations of friends at meeting, and, on this afternoon, we saw the whole ceremony gone through with more than ordinary earnestness, by Sidi Abdallah and an Arab acquaintance, passing through the town on his way to Tunis. First embracing, by kissing each other's right shoulder, they then touched hands, and each kissed his own, afterwards laying it upon his heart with a graceful inclination of the body and the usual pious form of salutation ; then commenced a string of enquiries, each made separately, after the health of the friend, his wives, children, relations, horses, camels, flocks, dogs, and cats, the same anxiety seemingly expressed to hear of pussey's welfare as of that of any other member of the family. The questions are asked as quickly as possi-

ble, each accompanied by an inclination of the head and with the hand on the heart ; answers are given, in a set form, with the same rapidity, and with the same number of bows ; it is all gone through verbatim by both parties, and the ceremony occupies nearly as much time as it takes to describe it.

The weather during the day had been delightful, a brisk breeze and clear sky, with the thermometer at noon at sixty-eight degrees, and at six P. M. at sixty-four degrees. Our Kairouan acquaintance the Hadji, had joined us the previous evening at Tuburba, and had amused himself and others by telling stories and singing long metrical romances in a wearisome, nasal tone.

After leaving Testoor the road lay for rather more than a mile parallel with the river, which, at the point where it is joined by the Siliana, makes an obtuse angle, the stream flowing from the west, and its course from hence to the sea, into which it falls near Cape Farina, being north-east. The conical mountain on the left bank of the Majerdah is the point where the mountain range that runs north to Biserta strikes off at a right angle to the westward.

Fording the Siliana at a spot where the ruins of a bridge, destroyed by a flood a few years ago, still encumber its bed, and having enjoyed a beautiful view of the river, with its wooded banks backed by the rocky face of the mountain at the base of which it flows, we took leave of the Majerdah for some time, not seeing it again until after two days' march on the other side of Keff in the Algerine territories. A farther ride of five miles up a gentle acclivity, through a broken country, covered with brushwood, brought us to the edge of an extensive basin-shaped valley, containing the ruins of the ancient city of Thignica, now known as Tounga, and wholly uninhabited. Sending on the baggage under the charge of the hambas, we left our horses at a clear spring of fresh water rising by the road side, and proceeded to explore the ruins on foot.

The principal remains are those of a large square castle, with flanking towers, built, evidently, subsequently to the destruction of the city, fragments of columns, cornices, stones with inscriptions, &c., being included in the materials of its massy walls. To the eastward, higher up the slope, is a small arch,

and, above it, the ruins of what must have been a splendid temple. A considerable part of it is still standing, but the portico with its columns, sculptured frieze, and dedicatory inscription, of which only a few words are legible, lie scattered around. A single fragment of one of the columns measured twenty-five feet in length, and three feet three inches in diameter.

From the rising ground to the south-east, where probably stood the citadel, a fine view is obtained, and on descending the hill we saw the ruins of a theatre, and of another large edifice, of which portions of many columns, to the height of three and four feet, are still standing. Sandstone was the chief material used in the construction of Thignica, and there would seem to have been a great scarcity of marble, for in our two hours' walk we saw only one small piece, whilst at Carthage, Thapsus, Thysdrus, &c., the ground is strewed with innumerable fragments.

Remounting our horses, we cantered on to Tubersook, a distance of six miles, passing over a beautiful country, especially the valley of the Oued el Kalah, another tributary of the M الجردا. Nothing could exceed the attention

with which we were received by the Kaïd, Hameda, who conducted us in person over the town.

The situation of Tubersook, the ancient Thibursicumbure, is extremely beautiful. It is picturesquely placed on a rocky height, part of which rises to a considerable elevation above the town, and is approached by a road winding through a grove of magnificent olive trees. Without the walls are gardens producing an abundance of fruit and vegetables, whilst within the town rises a spring of water, almost rivalling that of Zouwan as to copiousness and purity.

We followed the course of the stream for a short distance under the walls, through a tangled copse of fruit trees and shrubs, with weeds and grass growing breast high, to an ancient gate of the town, now walled up, excepting a low arch, beneath which the water runs. On either side are two pilasters, and a large oblong stone originally placed over the gateway now forms a part of the material by which it is blocked up, and bears an inscription, interesting from being one of the very few relics of Christianity that have escaped destruction. The inscription, which is as

follows, commences with $\chi P \omega$, the well known Byzantine monogram of the name of our Saviour.

SALVIS DOMINI NOSTRI XRISTIANISSIMIS
 ET INVICTISSIMIS IMPERATORIBVS
 IVSTINO ET SOFIA AVGVSTIS HANC MVNITIONEM
 OMAS EXCELLENTISSIMVS PREFECTVS FELICITER
 EDIFICAVIT.*

The greater part of the ancient walls around the town are still standing, and in many places their construction is singular; frames of large stones, forming square compartments, being filled up with smaller ones, in the same manner as the wooden framework of an old English cottage is filled up with bricks.

Early in the afternoon, the Kaïd provided mules, and accompanied us himself to Dugga, a ride of two miles, the road skirting the base of the hills in a south-westerly direction. On the declivity of a hill, overlooking a wide and fertile plain, are placed the few hovels that compose the miserable village of Dugga, in the midst of the ruins of the ancient Thugga, which from the natural beauty of its position, its extent,

* Justin II., or the younger, reigned from A. D. 565 to 578.

and the magnificence of its buildings, must have been one of the principal cities in Africa.

Behind the house of the Sheick, who uses it as a cattle fold, are the ruins of a magnificent temple. The portico still stands entire, supported by six noble monolithic columns of the Corinthian order, and of admirable proportions and workmanship. On the pediment is an alto-relievo, so much injured by time, that it is perfectly allowable to make a guess, and call it a colossal eagle, and underneath, on the entablature, are traces of an inscription, much defaced. The body of the temple is a complete ruin, with the exception of the grand entrance leading from the portico, which, though formed of three stones only, it equals in height. Upon the lintel are inscribed the names of the founders of the edifice.* The wall forming the back of the temple, excepting a lofty niche which seems to be of the same date as the original building, has been rudely erected at some later period.

Spread over a great extent of ground, and hid amidst thick plantations of olives, are the

* L MARCI'S SIMPLEX ET L MAR
CIVS SIMPLEX REGILLIANVS S. P. F.

ruins of many large edifices ; an amphitheatre, the arena choked with a dense growth of the prickly pear ; a gymnasium, overgrown with a tangled thicket of briars, thorns, and creepers ; a triumphal arch ; many cisterns, and sepulchral monuments, with an infinite variety of the remains of private habitations. Lower down the hill, below the site of the town, are several mausoleums ; one of these which had remained nearly perfect until within a few years, has lately been destroyed, in order that a Punic inscription, and the sculptures which adorned it, might be carried to Europe. Among the stones heaped around its base are two alto-relievos, of indifferent execution, representing a warrior in a chariot, driving four horses abreast.

North-east of the temple is a theatre, partially excavated in the rocky side of the hill. Many of the rows of seats remain perfect, and portions of several columns are still standing. An abundant spring above the site of the city supplies water for irrigation, and was, doubtless, the original cause of its foundation, for almost invariably throughout the Regency, wherever good water is to be found, there also are the ruins of a town.

We returned to Tubersook in the evening, and the Kaïd, who possesses a first-rate cook, gave us an excellent supper ; a dish in which both mutton and fowl were dressed in a kind of thick sauce, composed of yolk of egg, lemon-juice, and butter, was remarkably good. The Kaïd had been one of the mamelukes of the highest grade, and being a man of some ability, he had first accompanied a Tunisian Ambassador to Europe, visiting Malta, Italy, and France, and, on his return, had received his present appointment.

CHAPTER X.

Ejah—Sidi Abder Rubbu—Mausoleum—Inhospitable reception at Keff—Antiquities—Relics of Christianity—A traveller's duty—Situation of Keff—Storks—A Moorish custom—Departure from Keff—The Milleg—Douar of the Wurghas—Lions—Bad weather—Nocturnal annoyances—Arab dogs—Gossiping—Our medical practice—Excessive hospitality of the Sheick—Cross the frontier—Douar of the Risghis—Extensive view—The valley of the Seybouse—Return to Bôna.

ON the morning of the 8th of May, at half past four o'clock, we left Tubersook for Keff, a long day's journey of seventy Arab miles. Leaving Dugga to our right, we proceeded up the valley of the Oued el Kalah, to Ejah, a large square fort, standing on the site of an ancient town, and formed of its ruins, in the same style as those of Lambtah and Tounga, already described.

At nine we passed Arsallah, a spring rising near a cavern which appears to have been the quarry that supplied the stone of which the

ancient Musti, a mile further on, was built. The place is now called by the Arabs, Sidi Abder Rubbu, the name of a distinguished Marabout, who lies buried amidst the ruins. The walls of the town can be easily traced, and the remains of two gates are still standing. Large tracts of land throughout this valley are under cultivation, and the corn had attracted many birds, for, in addition to the partridge and the quail, there were great numbers of the Poule de Carthage, and also pigeons, or rather doves, with a variety of smaller birds, amongst which the blue jay and the still more brilliant plumage of the golden oriole, were conspicuous.

After a three hours' further ride, we arrived at a mausoleum, of a simple yet beautiful form; square at the base and circular above, it is still in excellent preservation, and the brief inscription, giving merely the name and age of the person to whose memory it was erected, harmonises with the general simplicity of the design. It stands near the ruins of another town, placed in a grassy valley, through which runs a stream, in the shade of the tangled thicket on the bank of which, we made our mid-day halt.

On leaving the valley, we rode for four or five miles through a rocky pass, covered with brushwood and dwarf pines, mingled with a few olives and karoubas. Here we made the discovery that Baba Abdallah was as cowardly as quarrelsome and selfish, for he had worked himself up into a state of the greatest possible nervousness, because a party of the Bey's troops, sent to collect tribute from a neighbouring tribe, had been attacked and beaten in this pass. We, however, much to his relief, met with nothing more formidable than a family party of men, women, and children, who were removing with all their property. Descending from the hills, we entered an extensive plain, bounded on the north by the mountain range upon which Keff is placed, and to the south and west by ridge beyond ridge of lofty mountains. Here again we passed some insignificant ruins, and, bearing away to our right, a winding path through rocky and barren hills, brought us to Keff, which we reached at half past six.

The Kaiya of Keff, to whom we had been introduced at the Bardo by Sir Thomas Reade, is a fine specimen of a Tunisian of

the higher class. His manner had been so frank and hospitable when Sir Thomas Reade had mentioned that we were about to visit Keff, that although we knew he was still at Tunis, we fully expected to have been well received by his son, who was the acting Kaiya in his father's absence.

On our arrival we were lodged in a spacious house, the property of the Bey, not far from the Kasbah; so far all was well, but with the exception of the bare walls of the house, it was with difficulty we procured any thing; our horses could not be fed after their long march, and, at ten o'clock, after having supped upon some provisions we had brought with us in case of emergency, two bowls of bad couscouso made their appearance. With some trouble we had previously managed to get a couple of dirty, ragged quilts, for bedding, such as the poorest village in the Regency would have afforded. Next morning we sent the Shawsh and the Mameluke to demand the cause of this treatment, and on their return we discovered that the young Kaiya, who is notorious for his debauchery, was intoxicated and in bed, but that, possibly, when he got sober, he might pay us a visit.

This he did not do, but sent a message towards evening, to the effect that we might call upon him. Of this condescension, after the inhospitable treatment we had received, we refused distinctly, to avail ourselves, unless he first came to us. During the whole of the night, and the early part of the following morning, the rain came down in torrents ; towards noon it cleared up, and on our stating that we intended walking about the city, and visiting whatever antiquities it might have to boast, two of the Kaiya's people were appointed to attend us.

Anciently Sicca Venesia, the modern city of Keff contains many ruins, but few of any importance. They consist merely of some large cisterns, and the remains of several buildings forming portions of private houses, into all of which we were freely admitted ; many fragments of columns, &c. are scattered about the city, and we met with several inscriptions.

These, and many others copied in the course of our journey, I purposely omit, as, although interesting on the spot, their repetition would be useless unless they contained some information of more general

interest than the monumental notices of unknown individuals, of which nine-tenths of the existing inscriptions consist. Not that I consider their collection as useless, for as they sometimes contain the name of the locality, they often form the only means by which the sites of various places mentioned in history can be recognised.

In two instances we met with the Cross. In one of these it was small, and placed within a circle on a square, being cut upon the keystone of an arch. Behind this arch is a semicircular recess containing five niches, and having the appearance, more especially as it is towards the east, of having been the spot where the altar of a Christian church once stood ; the other remains of the edifice, containing portions of a stone bearing an inscription built into the wall, have been converted into a private house, through which we had to pass to the inner court, where the arch above referred to stands. In the second instance it is singular that the emblem should have escaped destruction placed as it is in a conspicuous situation, for, on a large stone, probably the lintel of a door, and now inserted in a blocked up arch,

way in the open street, is sculptured, visible to every passer-by, a Greek cross, of considerable size, enclosed by a circular moulding, with a rudely formed palm on the one side, and on the other an olive branch. Around the spring rising within the city, are the remains of the building that once stood over it, and in an adjoining street lay a stone sarcophagus, with the fragments of another.

Returning to our house, we had a grand scene with two men belonging to the Kaiya, who had accompanied the servants that brought us our mid-day meal—a very shabby affair, which we refused to accept. Calling in all our people, with the addition of a Moorish doctor, who, having spent a few months in Italy, and being under the protection of an Italian consul took great interest in our affairs, we sat in a dignified manner upon the ragged quilts, and proceeded to state our grievances. After some little time, seeing that quiet remonstrances were of no avail, we agreed to get into a passion by turns. This did some little good, and they admitted that the young Kaiya was still inebriated. Sidi Abdallah and the two hambas were very indignant at the inhos-

pitable manner in which we were treated ; but Baba Abdallah took it very quietly, and was even beginning to make excuses, which, had he been allowed to proceed, would have done away with the impression we had already made : it therefore became necessary to set him down in the presence of the whole party, which was most effectually done by my jumping up suddenly, and emphatically abusing him in choice English, accompanied by suitably expressive gestures. It was with the greatest difficulty that we could refrain from laughing at the ludicrous air of fear and surprise with which he listened, with staring eyes and gaping mouth, to a long speech of which he did not understand a single word, and to which it was, therefore, impossible for him to reply. This plan succeeded admirably ; he, as well as all the others, saw that we were really angry, and the first-fruits of our objurgation were the carrying away of the dishes that had lain on the floor during the long discussion, and the replacement of them, in the course of half an hour, with double the number.

It may, perhaps, at the first view, appear strange that we should take so much trouble

on a point seemingly of so little moment, but it must be remembered that the fact of our taking no notice of an intentional slight, shewn by a man of such importance as the chief authority of the third city in the Regency, would have lowered us in the eyes of our escort, and, what is of more consequence, might affect the reception of any future travellers who should chance to take this route. I consider that it is the bounden duty of every traveller, in any part of the world, but more especially in countries so little visited as this, to bear constantly in mind that, although he himself may not suffer from his own parsimony, lavish expenditure, or from neglecting to assume the station that he ought to hold in the eyes of the inhabitants, yet those who follow after will be judged by his standard, and will suffer from the effects of his conduct.

In the afternoon, accompanied only by Baba Abdallah, we left the city by the eastern gate, outside of which are a set of large cisterns in tolerable preservation, and passed under a wall of rock, formed by the precipitous side of the hill, the higher ground of which we ascended a little more to the

eastward for the purpose of obtaining a better view of the city and the surrounding country.

Keff, placed on the declivity of the mountain, overlooks a wide plain to the south and west ; on the north it is defended by a deep valley, and on the east, a few hundred yards from the wall, the ground rises gradually into the mountain range that extends as far north as Tubersook. Strongly fortified, as the principal post near the Algerine frontier, the works are kept in good repair, and the Kasbah, built on the highest point at the northern angle of the city, is a fort of considerable strength, and is well supplied with artillery. The view from this spot is very extensive, the singularly wild outlines of the Constantine mountains forming the characteristic beauties of the scenery.

While sketching, we were annoyed by a number of boys, who had followed us from the city ; at first they contented themselves with saluting us by the usual complimentary epithets of "Roomi kelp," (Christian dog), &c., and then proceeded to throw stones, of which Baba Abdallah took no notice, until,

on the falling of one a little too near, I twirled him round by the shoulders, so that he could no longer pretend to be ignorant of what was going on. This formed the climax to the morning scene, and for the rest of the journey he held us in wholesome awe. After walking round the walls, we wandered about until evening. The city must have at one time contained a much larger population than at present, for a considerable space within the walls is either covered with ruins or unoccupied.

Storks, numerous in all the towns of North Africa, are still more so in Keff, which seems to be a favourite resort of these birds, for the shapeless bundles of sticks that compose their nests are to be seen on the top of every building rising a little higher than its neighbour. In almost every country, the stork, from the fearless familiarity with which it seeks the abodes of men, has been esteemed a harbinger of good fortune and is never molested. Both Moors and Arabs feel a sort of superstitious reverence for these birds, and assign to them the possession of reasoning powers of a superior order. It having been observed that on arriving at their nests after

a flight, they make a peculiar bowing motion, accompanied by a loud clattering noise caused by snapping together the upper and lower portions of the bill, like a pair of castanets, the natives believe that the storks are then engaged in an act of thanksgiving to God for having permitted them to return home in safety.

With regard to birds, there is a custom deserving of mention, from the nature of the feelings in which it originated. On the Moorish tombstones there may often be seen a small trough, or hole cut in the stone, which, after rain, holds water for some days ; this is intended for the use of the birds, with the idea that even after death a man may minister to the wants and contribute to the happiness of God's creatures.

The rain, towards night, again began to fall heavily, and the weather promised badly for our ride across the mountains ; we determined, however, to leave Keff in the morning, and sent notice of our intention to the Kaiya, at the same time requesting the letters to the frontier tribes, with which he was directed by the orders contained in the Bey's

amer, to furnish us ; these, after some delay, were made out and delivered.

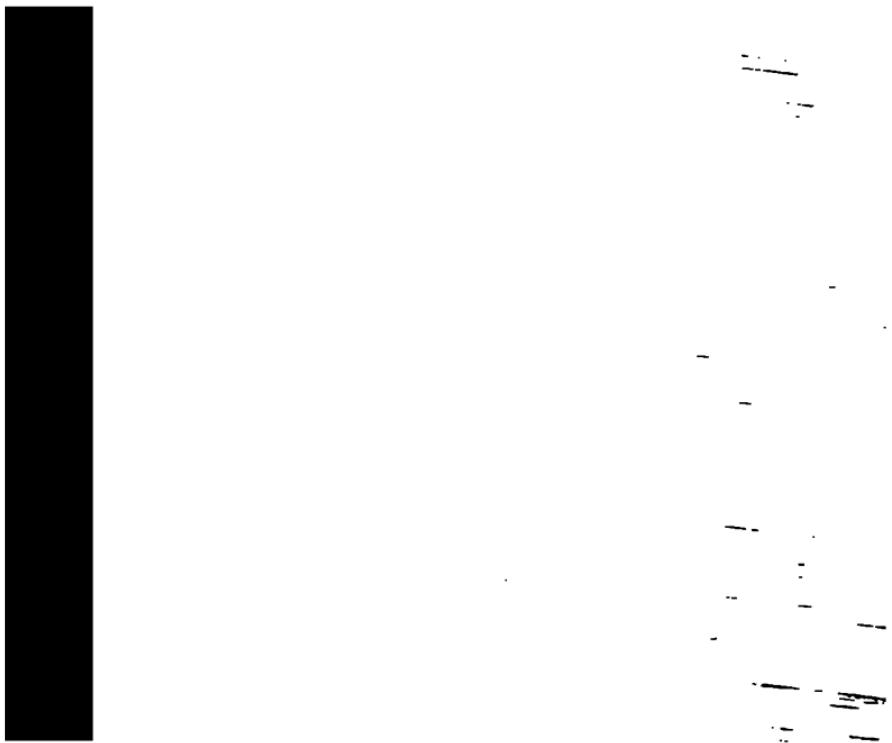
The morning of the 10th was bright and pleasant, when, at eight o'clock, we set forward. This was two hours later than we had intended, the delay having been caused by a parting struggle with the Kaiya's servants, for wherewithal to satisfy our hunger. Having asked for breakfast, we determined not to go without it, being well aware that the usual morning meal of thin flour cakes fried in oil ("eftyrah"), and eaten with honey, could be procured at five minutes notice. At length, perceiving us to be determined, the people yielded.

At the distance of a few miles from the city, we were overtaken by a party of four of the Kaiya's horsemen, who were sent to guide and see us safely into the hands of a tribe who were to pass us on as friends to the next douar, which would be within the Algerine territory. Crossing the hills, and passing through a curiously formed gap at the summit of the ridge, we descended into a plain on the banks of the Milleg, a river which, although larger than the Majerdah, loses its name on its confluence with the

latter, at a point some miles to the north-west of Keff. The battle-field of Zama, respecting the exact position of which so many disputes have arisen, lies somewhere in this neighbourhood, but no traveller has yet been able to point out the spot with any degree of certainty.

The rain had caused the Milleg to rise to such a degree, that we were but just able to cross without swimming ; the only casualties that happened, however, were part of the baggage getting wet, and a ducking received in a deep pool just below the ford, by the Hadji and one of the Keff troopers, to the tail of whose horse the former was clinging. For an hour the track wound up a narrow valley, through which flows a small tributary of the Milleg, then, bearing away to the left, we rode over a magnificent mountain country, by paths barely practicable after the wet weather, from the slippery nature of the mud.

A violent storm now arose, accompanied with drenching rain, which continued to pour without intermission, and we were not sorry when, at half past three, we saw the dark circle of the douar of the Wurgah tribe,



one visit, and in the former, they place a bait to attract him. Fifty men had been out on the day previous to our arrival, in chase of the lioness, for she had grown so bold as to have approached the douar, and she fell only on receiving the fourth ball, which was fired by the Sheick. Accidents often happen on these occasions, both from the lions and from the careless manner in which the Arabs fire, but luckily, none had occurred at the hunt in question.

We were anxious to know if there was any chance of another lion being found in the neighbourhood, and were informed that, doubtless, there were plenty, but such was the nature of the ground, that, unless their exact haunts were known (in which case they were generally killed), we might go out for a fortnight and never encounter a single beast. The skins of all lions killed throughout the Regency are sent to the Bey, who pays a handsome premium upon each. The flesh is eaten, and, contrary to our expectation, we found it excellent, and made a capital supper upon the ends of the ribs stewed with a little salt and red pepper; it tasted like very young beef, and was neither tough nor strong flavoured.

During the whole of the next day, with the exception of a short time in the afternoon, the rain descended in torrents, and although the douar was placed on the steep slope of a mountain, the central space and the ground near the tents was poached by the horses and cattle into mud a foot deep, and the water that had filled the slight trench dug around the upper side of the tent began to overflow, which caused the ladies of the family to turn out in the worst part of the storm, and deepen it, whilst the men remained snugly under cover.

The nights were cold, but we did not suffer much inconvenience from this cause, for our party, increased by an Arab who had asked leave to join us, was eleven in number, and there being a want of room, we were obliged to lie close, and thus kept each other warm. Occasionally in the course of the night a dog, a sheep, or a goat, seeking shelter from the storm, would force its way through the bushes placed in the interval between the sides of the tent and the earth, and entering, walk over the sleeping inmates, until kicked out. This was a trifle to the annoyance of the dogs; had they contented themselves, like those of other tribes, with only barking

all night it would not have signified, but one old dog, the bully of the douar, took up his position during both nights outside the tent, on the top between the two poles, and every half-hour he was either rushing down to fight the dogs below or they were scrambling up to attack him, in which latter case a desperate battle would take place immediately overhead, giving the people beneath every instant exactly the idea that the combatants would come through.

Towards strangers, after nightfall, these dogs are very savage, and even during the day a stick is an useful article when approaching a douar, as a new comer is sure to be set upon by a pack of yelping curs, whose favourite mode of attack is to sneak round to the rear and watch their opportunity to bite. They bear a good deal of resemblance to the Scotch sheep-dog in outward appearance, but they are wanting in sagacity, and, though fierce, are cowardly. As watch-dogs they cannot be surpassed; neither man nor beast can approach without their giving notice; and the Arabs rely upon their vigilance to guard their douars from surprise.

The Arabs, generally so calm and quiet in their manner, are arrant gossippers at heart; during our stay here, the small-talk was as incessant as the rain, and a great variety of subjects were discussed. Amongst other topics was that of dress, and a full hour was occupied in examining Sidi Abdallah's gala suit, which he had brought with him to wear at Bôna. We had an extensive medical practice, for our own people had on our arrival proclaimed the wonderful cures we had performed. Men, women, and children had all to be prescribed for, and were not only anxious to obtain medicines for their present ailments, but also a supply to prevent sickness at a future period.

In our character of physicians we were permitted to visit the women, and as we positively refused to prescribe for them without feeling their pulses and seeing their tongues, they were, perforce, obliged to uncover their faces; as usual, the ugliest and oldest of them all made the most fuss, and the Sheick himself was compelled to pull away her hands from her face. She was in a terrible fright at the fizzing of a Seidlitz powder, and trembled in every limb while drinking it. Two poor

little babies were also brought to us, one only a few days old; there was not much ceremony used with them, for, wrapped up in a woollen rag, they were pushed under the curtain and laid naked at our feet. Whatever may have since happened to these infants, our consciences are clear, for the prescription consisted of a small quantity of arrowroot, a pinch or two to be boiled in water, and each babe to suck the tip of its mother's little finger dipped thrice into the mixture, three times a-day.

The Sheick was pressing in his invitation to us to remain some time longer with him, and was most anxious to treat us with all proper respect. This, on some occasions, we would willingly have dispensed with, as for instance, in the preparation of our breakfast. Nothing could be nicer than the materials; hot cakes, a large piece of honeycomb, and fresh butter, produced by jerking to and fro a goat-skin filled with milk, slung under a triangle. We were just commencing operations, when, seating himself opposite to us, the Sheick dashed his filthy paw into the bowl of honey, and drawing forth a portion of the comb, squeezed it over

the cakes ; then, taking a handful of butter, he worked it up with the honey, wiped his fingers on the cakes, and handed them to us as properly prepared.

The state of the weather on the morning of the 12th was anything but favourable ; a quick succession of driving clouds swept over the mountains, it was blowing a gale of wind and raining heavily. The appearance of our cavalcade, as we started at six o'clock, was rather miserable, for the horses, covered only by a single blanket had been standing up to their knees in mud, and exposed to the storm ; most of them at some time or other had lain down and were thickly coated with clay, whilst their riders were almost equally dirty.

For ten hours we rode without halting, keeping a northwesterly direction through the mountains. The general appearance of the country, from the scarcity of wood, which we met with only in the valleys, is dreary, but the sides of the mountains are clothed with herbage, and we passed for mile after mile through a district that, in any civilized land, would be white with flocks and herds. During this time we saw only two douars, at each of which we changed our guides, and in

the course of the morning we had entered the Algerine territory. We fortunately found the Majerdah passable, a point upon which we had had our doubts. After crossing the river we found the scenery more romantic; rocky glens replaced the rounded slopes of the grassy hills, and the brushwood was mingled with clumps of splendid oaks. The "Valley of the Lions," so named by the Arabs, from its being a favourite resort of those animals, is a long wooded pass near the river, with overhanging rocks, and a mountain stream flowing through a thicket at its bottom. Continuing gradually to ascend, we left the valley of the Majerdah, passed the ruins of an ancient town near a marabout called Sidi Mesoud, and bore away to the westward in search of a douar of the Risghi tribe, which we did not reach until eight P. M., our horses rather tired, as we had marched fourteen hours over a most difficult country, in the midst of a storm of wind and rain, without halting.

By this time it was dark, and the ground being too wet for the Kaïd to pitch a separate tent, we shared one with a Jew trader who passes his time in travelling with goods from

tribe to tribe. The storm raged during the night with renewed violence, and the tent, old and ragged, afforded only indifferent shelter, and was so small, that although we had stowed ourselves as closely as possible, Mohamed and the Hadji, who were on the windward side, were wet to the skin. In the morning the sky was clear and the sun shone brightly. As soon as it was light, the Kaïd came to visit us, and sent forward a messenger to see that everything was prepared for our next halt.

On leaving, we had to climb the almost perpendicular face of the mountain upon which the douar was placed, and after nearly three hours of toil, we arrived at the highest summit of the Djebel Zahan, from whence we had a glorious view, of immense extent, while the atmosphere was so clear that, to the northward, we could see the plain of the Seybouse, and also Bôna, lying like a white spot on the sea-shore; in every other direction rose a wild chaos of mountains, with, in the far distance, to the southwest, the summits of a lofty range, probably the Djebel Auras, covered with snow.

Descending the mountain, we rode through

a pretty, broken country, in some parts well wooded, and having in others patches of cultivated ground, to a tent that had been prepared for us, together with a mid-day meal, by the kindness of the Kaid of the Risghi. After halting for an hour and a half, we remounted, and proceeded three hours farther to another douar, where we slept.

We were in our saddles by five o'clock on the morning of the 14th, the weather as delightful as it had hitherto been the reverse. The scenery of the valley of the Seyhouse, into which we shortly entered, is truly lovely ; on the banks of the river, the oak, elm, ash, silver poplar, and many other trees, attain a large size, the meadows scattered along its course, when not covered with heavy crops of corn, were waist deep in grass, mingled with the iris and other flowering plants that flourish in damp places, while the wild rose and the honeysuckle were blossoming in every brake. Owing to its winding course, we crossed the river three times, and, on the last occasion, Baba Abdallah, who was suffering considerably from fatigue, had rather a narrow escape from drowning, for, growing

giddy and nervous, he turned his horse's head down stream instead of in the contrary direction, and he was on the very edge of a deep hole, when the Hadji rushed to his assistance and brought him safely to the other side.

In the afternoon, we crossed the last range of hills bordering the plain of Bôna, and entered upon its level marshy ground,—a great relief to our horses, all more or less lame, from traversing the rocky mountain paths after having lost their shoes. Ten miles from Bôna, we were obliged to leave Baba Abdallah behind, at a small douar, and, a little after seven o'clock, our wearied horses having with difficulty accomplished the last three miles, we arrived at the end of this portion of our journey.

CHAPTER XI.

Bôna—The Opera in Africa—Forest of the Djebel Edough—
Fraicandeau de lion—Departure from Bôna—Dréan—
Mez-meia—Hammam Berda—Guelma—Its ruins and antiquities—Valley of the Alligha—Hammam Meskhoutin—
Hot springs—High temperature—Efficacy of the waters—
Roman baths and antiquities—Analysis—Curious cavern—
Latin inscriptions—Arrival at Constantine.

WE remained at Bôna until the 17th, principally on account of our horses, which, on the morning after our arrival, were scarcely able to move. Baba Abdallah arrived in the course of the morning, quite safe, and consoled himself after all his hardships by devouring an enormous breakfast, and finishing a bottle of wine. The greater part of the 15th had been occupied in settling accounts with our escort and servants, and in making arrangements for their return to Tunis, as well as for the continuation of our own journey to Constantine.

Our friends, as before, were all kindness, and, in the evening, we accompanied them to the opera, where we witnessed "Lucia di Lammermoor," very respectably performed by an Italian company, assisted by amateurs, chiefly Germans from the ranks of the Foreign Legion. The theatre, formerly a large granary, is prettily fitted up, and, in the absence of a professional company, performances for charitable purposes are often given by the amateurs of the garrison.

The following day we devoted to visiting the forest of the Djebel Edough, a distance of twelve miles from Bôna, and containing the finest timber in Algeria. A broad road, the work of the troops, winds up the face of the mountain, and renders the forest easily accessible. The thick mist that enveloped the upper half of the range of the Edough, the summits of which vary in height from two to three thousand feet, deprived us of an extensive prospect; but the sight of the noble trees that crown the ridge and clothe the northern slope of the mountains, well repaid us for our ride. The forest consists principally of oak, chesnut, and cork trees; the two former attain to an immense size,

and many of them are seen with their huge trunks rising upwards of thirty feet unbroken by a single branch. Descending the mountain, we issued from the clouds at exactly the same spot where we had lost sight of the plain in our ascent, and as we re-entered the town, the last rays of the setting sun were softening into the sober hues of twilight.

During dinner, one of the dishes sent up as a curiosity was a "fricandeau de lion," which, without intending to disparage the skill of the cook of the Lion d'or, I must observe was very inferior to the simple stew prepared in the douar of the Wurgahs. In the course of the evening, we had a formal leave-taking with Sidi Abdallah and others of the party, who were to set out at daybreak on their return to Tunis by the direct route of La Calle and Beja. We were really quite sorry to part with them after having had them for companions for so many weeks.

On the morning of the 17th, we left Bôna at nine o'clock, in a much humbler manner than we had entered it a few days previously, for our retinue had dwindled down to an Arab, the proprietor of the horse and mule

carrying our baggage, and one Maltese servant, who spoke both English and Arabic. The route to Constantine, after passing the ruins of Hippo, lies in a direct line nearly south across the plain to Dréan, where we arrived in four hours. Some miles to the right of the road, is the extensive Lake of Fetzara, placed at the base of the western range of the Djebel Edough.

At Dréan we halted for two hours. Established in the centre of the plain as a military post, to keep open the communication with Guelma and Constantine, it is nothing more than a small field-work thrown up around the barrack, canteen, and store-houses, and is the station of the officer charged with the management of the neighbouring tribes, to the number of twenty-two. In the apartments of this officer we saw a fine collection of skins of wild beasts, and many other curiosities, amongst which was a dagger, a real Toledo blade, with a name on one side and a motto on the other. He had purchased it from an Arab to the south of Constantine, and its temper was so fine, that a good stroke would drive it through a five

franc piece. He had also a delightful little pet in the shape of a wild boar a few weeks' old, a funny little creature, striped brown and white, and having round its neck a red morocco collar to which was attached a silver bell ; it was full of antics, and followed its master about like a dog, coming when called, and feeding from the hand.

We slept this night at the canteen of Nez-meïa, about the same distance from Dréan as the latter from Bôna. During the last four miles of our ride, the country became more undulating, and in parts was covered with brushwood. Nez-meïa, signifying "a place of scorpions," not being a regular military post, consists only of a sort of temporary barrack and a canteen, placed in a valley at the foot of the Djebel Aoura, through which flows a small stream that afterwards becomes the river Boudjemah. The canteen, a rough wooden building, is kept by a retired regimental "vivandiere," a fine specimen of her class, and she bustled about most good-humouredly to make the strangers comfortable.

Next morning we crossed the pass over

the Djebel Aoura, and descended towards the Seybouse, passing, at a distance of three miles from its banks, the hot spring of Hammam Berda, where a large tank and other ruins of the Roman period still exist. Fording the Seybouse, (which runs, in the neighbourhood of Guelma, from west to east,) at a spot where a bridge is in course of erection, we arrived at Guelma at nine A. M.

Here stood the Roman city of Calama, which, judging from the extent of the ruins, must have been a place of importance. In 1836, the first expedition against Constantine assembled here, having marched from Bôna by brigades, and when the army passed through on its return to Bôna after the failure of the attack, Marshal Clausel established a strong military post amidst the ruins and garrisoned it with a battalion of infantry. The greater portion of the wall of the Roman citadel, constructed of squared stones of considerable size, remained sufficiently perfect to allow of their being repaired, and the ancient fortifications that protected the Roman legions from the Numidians now enclose the modern barracks of the French troops.

Numerous foundations are met with in the environs, and in clearing the sites for the new buildings many objects of interest have been discovered ; tombs, altars, fragments of sculpture, &c., the most curious of which have been sent to Algiers and France, whilst the others are carefully preserved in an enclosure appropriated to that purpose. Amongst the remaining relics are several sets of mill-stones, some light enough to be turned by the hand, and others that must have required considerable power to work them ; they are all after the same model, the nether stone being conical.

The soil around the town is fertile, and the gardens appeared to be thriving ; but beyond them there has been no attempt at European cultivation, the garrison forming nearly the entire population, and there being but few inducements for civilians to become settlers. Since the capture of Constantine, the tribes in the vicinity of Guelma have submitted to their new masters with less reluctance than has been shewn in any other part of the Regency. Through the kindness of the commandant, to whom General Randon

had given us a letter, we were furnished with an escort of Spahis, and with written orders to the tribes on the road to Constantine to receive us.

As the day advanced, the weather changed for the worse, and at noon we left Guelma in a drizzling rain, with the thermometer at forty-eight degrees. After riding a mile or two up the course of the Seybouse we crossed it by a deep and dangerous ford, full of large stones and holes, and, skirting its northern bank, passed the military post of Mjez Hammar, considered to lie half-way between Bôna and Constantine, and placed near the confluence of the Alligha and the Cherf, which here form the Seybouse. Proceeding along the valley of the Alligha, we forded that river at a point where the stream winds picturesquely between steep banks covered with wood. At three o'clock we arrived at the hot springs of Hammam Meskhouten, the cloud of steam rising from them having been visible from some distance.

During the past year an invalid station has been established here; the medical officer in charge was good enough to act as our

guide, and to him we were indebted for much interesting information relative to the springs and the surrounding country. Between a small rivulet and the Alligha, and spread over an irregular space, perhaps a quarter of a mile in diameter, are numerous cones, formed by the deposits of the waters, which, issuing from the ground by many small apertures, continue to flow until these are choked by their own deposits, or until some change takes place in the internal arrangement of the spring, when the water bursts forth at another spot. The spring is so abundant that in several places a copious stream will follow a stroke or two of a pickaxe, and the principal source at present open was accidentally formed in this manner. From the spot where the larger springs rise, the thermal waters, in flowing over the bank of the rivulet have formed a calcareous deposit of great beauty, resembling a cascade of the purest white marble, occasionally tinged with various shades of green and orange.

The great peculiarity of the spring, however, is its high temperature, the waters rising at two hundred and three degrees, and a bath when filled having to stand a con-

siderable time before the temperature is sufficiently lowered to enable the patient to enter. The use of the baths, both water and steam, has been attended with the most beneficial results, especially in cases of paralysis, affections of the joints, rheumatism, &c., and has been also found most efficacious in diseases or injuries of the bones.

These springs were well known to the Romans, who must have formed a large establishment on the spot, for several baths still remain, two of the basins so perfect that they only required cleaning to be ready for use. The foundations of many other buildings are scattered around, amongst others those of a small Christian church, known to have been such from a cross being discovered when its ruins were taken to erect the new buildings. Several Roman coins and medals, as well as two or three of those supposed to be Numidian, have been found in the neighbourhood.

The superintendent possesses a valuable collection of minerals, including a complete series of specimens of the various deposits of the spring. To him we were further indebted for the following minute analysis of

the waters of Hammam Meskhoutin, of which a litre contains :—

Chloride of—

Soda	0.41560
Magnesia	0.07864
Potass	0.01839
Calcium	0.01035

Sulphate of—

Lime	0.38036
Soda	0.17653
Magnesia	0.00673

Carbonate of—

Lime	0.25722
Magnesia	0.04235
Strontian	0.00154

Arsenic in a metallic state	0.00050
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Silex	0.07000
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Organic matter (with traces of Fluorine and Oxide of Iron) about	0.06000
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Grammes. 1.52007.

And of gases :—

Carbonic Acid Gas	97.0
Sulphuretted Hydrogen	00.5
Azote	02.5

The vicinity of Guelma and Hammam Meskhoutin is rich in minerals ; lead has been discovered, and also sulphate of antimony, in great abundance. Shortly previous to our arrival a singular cavern had been

discovered in the mountains at a distance of half a day's journey from Guelma, into which our informant had not as yet penetrated far, but he intended making a party to explore it thoroughly, in which I suppose he succeeded, a slight description of the cavern having appeared in the French papers of the end of August. Formed in the calcareous rock, the cavern is entered from the north, by a single opening, and descends by an inclined plane 3900 feet in length, to a depth of thirteen hundred feet below the surface. Stalactites of a thousand different forms hang from the vault, and the passage is in places impeded by the huge blocks of stone that have fallen from the roof.

But what contribute most to the interest of this immense cavern, are the Latin inscriptions, cut in the solid rock near the entrance, and which, dating from the early ages of Christianity, are probably the work of Christian fugitives, who here sought a refuge from some of the numerous persecutions of those periods. Most of them are illegible, or perhaps sufficient attention has not been paid to decipher them, but in one

place the name of “Donatus,”* is distinctly visible.

The Arabs relate the most absurd legends concerning this cavern, and never enter it, through dread of the guardian genii with whom they people it. The party that explored it, however, seem to have overcome the fears of at least one Arab, for they were accompanied by the Sheick of the tribe in whose district it is situated. There is no tradition amongst the tribes of its having ever been entered by man, and this was, probably, the first time that, for many centuries, its rocky vaults had echoed the sound of a human voice.

Leaving the picturesque valley of the baths, we crossed the hills to the south, by a track nearly as bad as some of the mountain passes on the frontier, and regaining the direct route from Mjez Hammar to Constantine, and ascending a long, wearisome hill, in the midst of a drenching rain, arrived at eight, P.M., at a large douar, where we

* For a concise account of the origin and progress of the schism of the Donatists, commencing early in the fourth century, see the twenty-first chapter of “Gibbon’s Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.”

slept. When the Arabs heard that we were English, they appeared much astonished, and became very inquisitive as to what we could possibly be doing travelling as friends of the French, and with a French escort. The feeling that the French and English are constantly at war, seems to be universal throughout the tribes.

At daybreak on the 19th, we set out for Constantine, where we arrived at half past five in the afternoon, having passed over a dreary succession of hills and valleys, covered with grass, but entirely denuded of wood ; a small bush, ten or twelve feet high, growing by the road-side two hours' march from the city, and hung all over with shreds of cloth and rags, the superstitious offerings of travellers for safety on their journey, being the only plant that, throughout the whole distance, can claim to be called a tree.

From the summit of the pass beyond El Harreea, we had a magnificent view of mountain-scenery ; the city of Constantine is also visible from this spot, and, to the eastward, we recognised many of the mountains about Keff and those to the southward, with whose forms we had become familiar.

CHAPTER XII.

First view of Constantine—Its situation and appearance—Enter the city—Fortifications—Siege and capture of Constantine in 1837—Monuments—Improvements—Street architecture—Cork model—Palace of the Bey—The ravine—The river Rummel—Ancient bridge—Walk round the city—The falls of the Rummel—The Kasbah—Place of execution—Roman house—Ancient history of Constantine—Its present population and trade—Funeral of Sula Bey.

ON arriving at the verge of the plateau of Mansourah, the high ground to the eastward of Constantine, a glorious prospect burst upon us. A monotonous ride of twelve hours had the better prepared us to enjoy the striking contrast offered to the surrounding country, by the singular yet beautiful situation of the ancient capital of the Numidian kings.

The city, an assemblage of houses, roofed with reddish tiles, and densely crowded to-

gether, occupies the surface of an immense mass of rock, sloping towards the south-east, and separated from its parent mountain by a precipitous ravine of great depth, at the bottom of which flows the stream of the Rum-mel. The general uniformity of the buildings is broken by the minarets and square towers of the mosques, and by the long range of hospitals and barracks erected by the French on the site of the Kasbah.

The form of the city, which exactly follows that of the plateau on which it stands, is a trapezium, of which the acute angle is towards the south; its greatest length from north to south being about three quarters of a mile. Its northern and eastern faces are rendered impregnable by the naturally scarped sides of the ravine, which varies in depth from three to eight hundred feet. On the western side the rock descends almost perpendicularly into the plain, and the only point where the city is at all accessible by nature is towards the south, where a ridge, barely three hundred yards wide, with a steep descent on either hand, connects it with the adjoining height of Coudiat-Ati.

We entered the city at its eastern angle,

crossing the ravine by a bridge of three tiers of arches ; and, passing through the Bab-el-Kantara, or "gate of the bridge," we followed the tortuous windings of the narrow streets into the heart of the city, where we took up our quarters at the Hotel de l'Europe, formerly the residence of one of the wealthiest inhabitants of Constantine.

On our arrival at Bôna we had learnt, to our great disappointment, that General Be-deau and other officers to whom we had letters of introduction, and whose acquaintance we were anxious to make, were absent on an expedition to the southward, with a column principally composed of the garrison of Constantine ; but our regrets were much diminished by the friendly and soldier-like reception we met with from the colonel of the 22nd regiment, who commanded in the city and from other officers of the garrison.

As one of the points of the greatest interest, our first visit was made to the scene of the operations by which the city was taken by assault on the 13th of October, 1837. Passing through the gate Bab-el-Oued, or Port Valée, as the gate, now building on the site of the ancient entrance, has been

named, in honour of the Marshal, and proceeding along the ridge before mentioned as connecting the city with the surrounding country, we ascended the height of Coudiat-Ati, and, on turning round towards the walls, the south-western face of the city lay before us.

The fortifications on this side consist of a wall from twenty to thirty feet high, flanked by towers of the same elevation, and further defended by the loop-holed barracks, formerly the quarters of the Turkish troops of the late Bey, a large building placed near the gate Bab-el-Oued, on either side of which are the gates of Bab-el-Djedeed and Bab-el-Ghabia. The greater part of these works are the fortifications of the ancient city, which have been repaired at different periods. Up to the time of the siege, they were heavily armed with guns and wall pieces, and every other point being perfectly secure, the whole strength of the garrison was concentrated at this spot.

The French batteries placed on the slope of the Coudiat-Ati breached the rampart close to the Bab-el-Oued, and on the morning of the 13th of October the breach being

reported practicable, the order to advance was given by the Duc de Nemours. Led by the young and gallant Lamoricière, the first column rushed to the assault ; in the breach a bloody and desperate struggle took place, a portion of the wall fell and crushed numbers beneath its ruins, a magazine exploded, and besiegers and besieged met together a common death ; foot by foot, the breach was contested, the courage of the garrison availed them but little against the enthusiastic ardour of the French troops, and the tri-colour waved triumphantly upon the walls of Constantine. Long after the city was taken, the contest continued in the dark labyrinth of the streets, and many hundreds of the inhabitants lost their lives in attempting to escape by descending the ravine. But few, however, succeeded ; in most instances the cords broke, or were cut by the sharp corners of the rock, and the bottom of the ravine was strewed with the mangled bodies of men, women, and children.

Two days previously to the assault, General Damrémont, the Governor-General, was killed whilst examining the effects of the fire of the batteries, and a small stone pyra-

mid marks the spot where he fell. In the open space between the walls and the height, stands an isolated minaret, to which has been affixed a small marble tablet, bearing the inscription—

AUX BRAVES MORTS DEVANT CONSTANTINE
EN 1836 ET 1837.

Improvements similar to those of Algiers, Bôna, and other towns in the Regency, are in progress here. A square has been formed close to the palace of the Bey, now converted into the residence of the general commanding the province, and into public offices ; new streets branch off at each angle, and several others are in course of formation in various parts of the city. Except the Bey's palace, there are no buildings in Constantine remarkable either for size or beauty of architecture ; even the mosques are small and devoid of ornament.

For the most part the houses are built of sun-dried bricks and clay, often upon the foundations of Roman structures, whose walls in many places rise several feet above the surface of the ground. Houses of a better class are constructed of stones taken from the ancient ruins, and of bricks burnt in a kiln ;

when they consist of two stories, the upper almost invariably projects, or, as at Algiers, an arch is thrown over the narrow street. The great difference in the outward appearance of the city when compared with other places in the Regency, is the absence of the glaring terraced roofs, which are here replaced by angular ones, covered with dark red tiles.

In the workshop of M. Duclaux, we saw large portions of what is to be a model of the entire city, composed of cork, on a scale of $\frac{1}{200}$ th of the actual dimensions. The parts already finished, have been executed with the greatest fidelity, not a window or door omitted, and when completed it will be an interesting memorial of one of the most singularly situated cities in the world, and which, as far as its buildings are concerned, is daily losing its most characteristic features. The constructor of the model has been already engaged for four years and a half, and does not expect to finish it under two years more; he is most enthusiastic on the subject, and certainly seems to consider that one of the most important results consequent upon the occupation of the city by his countrymen, is

the opportunity it has given him of representing it in cork.

The palace, situated nearly in the centre of the city, is in great part a modern building, erected by Ahmed, the late Bey of Constantine, so lately as since the conquest of Algiers. Externally, it is hardly to be distinguished from the surrounding crowd of houses, and it is only on entering that its great extent becomes perceptible. The various buildings are so arranged that they form four courts, having around each arcades supported by marble pillars, while the interior spaces are ornamented with fountains and planted with orange trees, vines, and flowering shrubs. The apartments are lofty and well proportioned, and although when examined in detail, the palace cannot be admired either for its architectural beauty, the rarity of its materials, or the richness of its decorations, yet the effect of the whole is exceedingly pleasing.

We dined in the palace with the commandant, and as the day had been rather hot, the table was placed in one of the arcades; we met a large party of the officers of the garrison, and one of the principal in-

habitants of the city. Both this and the following evening we passed in most agreeable society at the rooms of an officer of the 22nd regiment, whose acquaintance we had been so fortunate as to make some weeks previously, on board the steamer running between Algiers and Bôna.

We set forth at an early hour on the morning of the 21st to explore the ravine, under the guidance of an intelligent soldier, who had been obligingly sent with us by the "Capitaine de Place." Leaving the city by the Bab-el-Kantara, we crossed the bridge, the scene of Marshal Clauzel's ill-judged and mismanaged attack in 1836, and, turning to the left, and descending by a path winding through a plantation of cactus to the bottom of the ravine, we reached the foot of the bridge, on the southern side of which the Rummel enters the rock and flows through a subterranean channel for a considerable distance beneath the ravine on the northern face of the city. During its subterranean course, there is a singular opening thirty or forty yards in diameter, where the rock has given way, and on looking down, the river is seen rushing through its self-formed tunnel.

A little below this, where the sides of the ravine are highest and most precipitous, it reappears, and issuing from its rocky prison, the Rummel falls into the plain by a succession of cascades.

Passing under the bridge, we were able to proceed by a narrow ledge of rock on the face of the precipice, to a distance of three hundred yards, when it abruptly ceases; from this point the spring of an arch is visible on the Mansourah side. It is difficult to conceive by what means a single arch could be thrown across the ravine, but the foundation still remains on the other side, and it formed probably part of an aqueduct supplying the city with water from one of the numerous springs which rise in the plateau of the Mansourah.

The bridge spanning the ravine is one of Roman architecture; erected upon nature's arch, that here covers in the river, it rises in three tiers to the surface of the ground, with which the roadway is level. The lower portion is undoubtedly the work of the Romans, whilst the upper, having been subsequently destroyed, has been rebuilt at a still later period. The bridge is decorated

with bas-reliefs of an eagle, two elephants, and a female figure ; they are much worn, and appear to have been originally but roughly sculptured. The structure was erected to serve a double purpose, water having been conveyed along its centre by an aqueduct which passes between the upper and lower tiers of arches.

Leaving the ravine by the same path by which we had descended, we walked along the plateau of the Mausourah, passing the fountain that supplies the city with spring water, which has to be carried in skins on the backs of men or asses. On arriving opposite the southern angle, at which point the ravine commences, we entered a small cave a few feet above the level of the river, and in which rises a tepid spring at the temperature of eighty-two degrees ; it is the rendezvous of all the washerwomen of the city, who take advantage of this supply of water from nature's own cauldron. Continuing our course up the bank of the river, we at length crossed it by a wooden bridge, erected below the spot where the stream of Bou-Marzoug joins the Rummel at a place called El-Kouas, or "the arches," from the re-

mains of an ancient aqueduct still standing. Between this bridge and the city the cavalry barracks have been built, and, ascending to the Bab-el-Oued gate, the open space before which was crowded with Arabs, attending the market with the country produce, we followed the path that leads down the steep descent on the western side to the falls of the Rummel.

The view from hence is magnificent ; on either hand rise the perpendicular precipices of Mount Mécid and the rock on which the city stands, to a height of eight hundred feet, while, rushing out of its contracted bed, the river falls in sheets of foam over a rugged ledge of rocks, and then flows on calmly through a wooded valley to the plain. From the upper part of the cascade a stream of water is conducted by wide channels along the face of the hill, and drives three mills in succession. A few pretty cottages, inhabited by Europeans, are built on the lower part of the declivity, and are surrounded with thriving gardens. Half-way up, a spring, similar to that on the other side of the city, rises in the calcareous rock ; it is, however, nearly a degree warmer. A deep vault, of

Roman workmanship, reached by a narrow passage and a flight of steps, forms a commodious bath, and to the water the Arabs ascribe many healing qualities.

Returning to the city, we visited the site of the ancient kasbah, on which a large hospital and spacious barracks have lately been erected ; they stand at the northern angle of the rock, and on its highest point. Tradition points out this spot as the place of execution, from whence adulterers and other criminals were precipitated into the abyss beneath. Below the kasbah are a series of enormous cisterns, some of which have been converted into store-houses, and others are intended as quarters for the troops should it become necessary to increase the garrison, whose strength, including the force absent with the column, varies from four to five thousand men of all arms. In clearing the ground for the new buildings, several fragments of columns, of gigantic dimensions were laid bare, and the soil seemed in great part to be composed of rubbish.

I have previously mentioned that the walls of the ancient houses in many places stand several feet above the surface, and that the

present habitations are built upon them, but we also visited a house that remains entire, save some portions of the roof. The floors, however, are raised considerably above their proper level by the accumulation of the dirt of ages. This is the only Roman habitation now standing in the city, and the officer by whom it had been lately accidentally discovered was so obliging as to guide us to it.

Ancient historians make frequent mention of Cirta, (Constantine,) the capital of the kingdom of Numidia, and praise its splendour and the impregnability of its position. At one period, anterior to the dominion of the Romans, the city alone could send twenty thousand infantry and ten thousand horsemen into the field. Cæsar, at the successful close of his contest with Pompey, granted Cirta and an extensive territory to Sittius, and admitted it to all the privileges of a Roman city, under the name of *Colonia Sittianorum*. In the beginning of the fourth century, it was destroyed by the troops of Maxentius, and shortly afterwards it was raised from its ruins by the Emperor Constantine, who gave his own name to the new city. Since

this time, its history has been that of Carthage, Hippo, and the other cities of Africa, except that its natural position has been the cause of the site never having been entirely abandoned. Before the French occupation of Algiers, the Bey of Constantine was appointed by and tributary to the Dey of Algiers, but upon the downfall of the latter the Bey declared himself independent.

The present city, a year or two before its capture by the French, was said to contain about thirty thousand inhabitants, which number was much reduced by those who fled from it at that time; these have been gradually returning as their confidence in the security of the French government increased, and at present the population is considered to be about twenty thousand.

Owing to its position, in the midst of a mountain country, and being 2300 feet above the level of the sea, Constantine is generally healthy. The troops have occasionally suffered from fevers, &c., but the sickness cannot be attributed to the climate, and the seeds of these disorders have been generally sown elsewhere.

The trade is wonderfully increasing, and

is almost entirely in the hands of native merchants, who purchase the produce of the surrounding country and of the interior with European merchandise. Many of these traders who live in apparent poverty, have goods to the amount of fifty or sixty thousand francs passing annually through their hands, and such is their confidence in the government that large sums of money are deposited by them for safety in the military chest of the province.

On the morning of the 22nd, we received an invitation to be present, with the principal officers of the garrison, at the funeral of Sula Bey, the late head of one of the most important families in Constantine, and who had died on the previous day. The sending of these invitations to Christians, asking them to attend a religious ceremony within the sacred walls of a mosque, was an extraordinary proof of the progress made by the French in this neighbourhood. It was entirely unsolicited, and is the first case of the kind on record in Algeria.

Not the least curious part of the affair was the fact of the invitations having been printed, and moreover they ran in the name

of the widow, an unprecedented occurrence amongst a people who are not only jealous of allusions in public to their females, but who also consider them as beings of an inferior order. This would appear to be the first-fruits of the kindness shewn and attention paid by the king and the French nation generally, to the Arab chiefs who had spent their winter in Paris.

The funeral ceremony was simple. The body, placed in a litter, was borne amidst an immense crowd of relatives and friends to the burial-place, a small chapel attached to a mosque built and endowed by the family of the deceased, and the grave was dug to the depth of five or six feet, beneath the pavement ; prayers were chanted by numerous priests whilst the body was being laid in the grave, and during the time occupied in filling it up and in replacing the stones. The nearest relatives stood around, and the mosque was crowded with guests and spectators, amongst whom the handsome young chief I had seen so often in Paris stood conspicuous, with the broad red riband and the commander's cross of the Legion of Honour round his neck, where it had been placed by the king him-

self, at a farewell audience. Several women were present in another portion of the building, but they were separated by a temporary railing from the men. The whole funeral ceremony lasted barely an hour, and when over the two sons of the deceased stood at the entrance of the mosque, and received the salute of each person, whatever might be his rank, as he passed.

In the course of the morning we took leave of the friends we had made during our short sojourn in Constantine, and as European travellers, unless four in number, are not permitted to pass through the country between it and Philippeville without an escort, the commandant ordered two Spahis to be in readiness to attend us whenever we chose to set forward.

CHAPTER XIII.

Departure from Constantine—Mc Adam in Africa—Le coup blanc—Diligence—“Les Zephyrs”—Artillery and Agriculture—Military farm yard—Philippeville—Algiers—Abd-el-Kader—Conclusion.

AT mid-day on the 22nd we took our departure from Constantine, and, descending the hill, crossed the Rummel, which, following from hence a north-westerly course, falls into the Mediterranean between Djidjeli and Collo, losing however its name at the point where it joins the Oued Kebeer, or “great river,” the Ampsaga of ancient geographers. The road to Philippeville, a distance of twenty-one leagues, had only lately been completed by the troops, the greater part is macadamised and kept in

excellent order, cantonniers, as in France, being placed at regular stations.

For a mile or two we rode through a rich, cultivated country, displaying fields enclosed with fences, and here and there the vine-covered cottage of an European settler. Beyond this not a tree is to be seen, until near Smendou, a fortified military post where we changed our escort, and then, commencing gradually to ascend, crossed a mountain range, of considerable height. Entering upon a wide valley, in some parts cultivated, and in others covered with brushwood, we passed the Camp des Toumiettes, and arrived at dusk at that of El Arrouch. Instead of a rough wooden shed of a canteen, we found a regularly built hotel, dedicated in due form “au pauvre diable”; the landlord, well known to the army of Constantine by the sobriquet of “le loup blanc,” is the father of the African colonists, having accompanied the expedition against Algiers in 1830.

He was in capital spirits, having only this

day come out of prison at Constantine, where he had been confined for having violated the order forbidding Europeans to travel between Philippeville and Constantine in smaller parties than of four armed men. This rule is stringently enforced, not on account of any danger being apprehended from the tribes on the route, but because small bands of Kabyles occasionally come down from the mountains in the vicinity, for the sake of plunder. For the convenience of travellers frequent convoys, which they are permitted to join, leave the various camps at stated times, and, what a few years ago would have been laughed at in Paris as an idle chimera, a diligence runs regularly, and performs the distance in two days.

Early next morning we walked over the camp, where the experiment of forming a fortified village is being tried on a large scale, and apparently with success. The landlord, M. Dutoit, who is a practical, enterprising, and persevering colonist, is

sanguine about the great advantages to be derived from the system. The first step taken is to fix upon a proper site for the new village, with a good soil and abundance of water in the neighbourhood ; a military post is established, the *enciente* marked out, and the interior space divided into lots, of sufficient extent to allow of a house, with all the necessary offices, stables, &c., to be erected upon it, and also to form a small garden or a yard. Labour being scarce and dear, the houses are built by government, and the colonist, on taking possession, pays a sum of five hundred francs, and enters into an engagement to pay by instalments a further one of a thousand, upon which sum interest is required.

To each building lot is attached a piece of land in the immediate vicinity, not exceeding twelve hectares in extent, and as soon as the sums above-mentioned have been paid, and a few conditions relative to the cultivation and clearing of the soil have been fulfilled, the

provisional title first given to the colonist is exchanged for an absolute grant, subject however, after the lapse of a certain number of years, to a small land-tax, if the government think proper to levy it, which hitherto has never been done. Settlers are not, by any means, compelled to have a house built for them, it is only intended to find a home for them on their arrival, especially for those who possess little or no capital. Those who prefer it may employ their own workmen and find their own materials, or they may procure the latter from the government stores at a certain fixed rate.

From the camp we proceeded to a military farm, beautifully situated on the right bank of the Sefsa, and two miles distant. The troops employed here are a detachment from one of the Battalions d'Afrique, or condemned regiments, raised only for service in Algeria, and composed of men who having undergone a certain amount of punishment, are not considered as eligible to serve again

in the ranks of their own regiments, but are drafted into these battalions, where, being all bad characters together, they can do each other no harm, and are moreover subjected to a much severer discipline than in the line. In the field they have been invariably distinguished for their reckless daring, and in quarters they are equally noted for insubordination. Throughout the army they are known as "Les Zephyrs."

The establishment, as yet in its infancy, promises to answer perfectly, the troops when they would otherwise be idle are usefully employed, a considerable tract of land is brought under cultivation, and the farm-yard is so laid out that it forms a fortified post. It certainly has rather a curious effect to see cow-houses and pigsties defended by loop-holed walls, a howitzer planted in the poultry-yard, and the sheep and cattle marched to and from their grazing-ground by a corporal and a file of men.

Many of the implements in use on the

farm are made, and all are repaired, in the work-shops of the establishment; there are also attached a garden and a nursery, from which, besides raising sufficient for their own use, the nurserymen militant are enabled to supply the colonists with seeds, fruit-trees, &c., which cannot otherwise be procured in the colony except at a considerable expense. Those men who work in the shops receive six sous, and those employed merely as farm labourers three sous, in addition to their daily pay. Since the commencement of the experiment, the offences that have been committed bear but a small proportion to those that formerly occurred during a similar period in garrison. The crops were looking well, and the whole establishment did great credit to the military farmers.

Leaving El Arrouch in company with a party of officers proceeding to Philippeville, we wound along the wooded and picturesque banks of the Sefsa, and then keeping to our

left, crossed a ridge of high ground, and descended into a rich, well-watered valley. On either side of the road were enclosed farms, gardens, orchards, and several extensive plantations of mulberries; large timber trees were scattered about, avenues of which were also planted by the road side, and we passed groups of European hay-makers working in the fields. Near the town, the soil is less fertile, and the seaward slopes of the mountains are little more than barren rocks, mingled with copses of stunted brush-wood. It was late in the afternoon when we arrived at Philippeville.

Constantine having fallen into the hands of the French, it was soon discovered that a more direct communication with the sea than that by the circuitous route of Bôna, was necessary to the prosperity of the new province and its capital. Surveys were ordered to be made, and the result of them was, that the spot where Philippeville now stands, was chosen as the site of the new port; and, in

the autumn of 1838, Marshal Valée laid the foundations of the town, to which he gave the name of his sovereign. The rapid increase of the town, and its growing importance as a place of trade, prove the justness of the views held by the Marshal. Built entirely by the French, it consists of one long and wide street, running inland from the harbour, between two hills, on whose slopes lie the other portions of the town, surrounded by walls enclosing a great extent of ground. The hospital and the barracks, conspicuously placed upon the hill to the eastward, are the principal edifices, and a road has been cut along the face of the cliffs that rise steeply from the sea-shore, to Stora, a distance of two miles.

This village, a mere cluster of houses, niched into an angle of the coast, is built amidst the ruins of the ancient Rusicada, a city which, in the time of the Romans, held the same position with regard to Constantine that Philippeville holds at present. Its

ruins are extensive, and may be traced as far westward as Philippeville, but, with the exception of a mosaic pavement of some beauty, representing Ariadne, surrounded with an ornamental border of devices, which has lately been discovered near the modern town, they are devoid of interest. From a block-house perched on the summit of a cliff behind Stora, the best view of Philippeville is obtained, and the wide expanse of the bay of Stora, sweeping round to the headland of the Cape de Fer, is visible at a single glance.

On the morning of the 25th, the mail steamer came in from Bôna, and at ten o'clock we sailed for Algiers in the war-steamer "Le Phare," one of the vessels of the Prince de Joinville's squadron at Mogadore, where her captain especially distinguished himself. We touched, as on our voyage to Bôna, at Djidjeli, Bouugia, and Dellys, at which latter place we arrived early on the morning of the 27th, and went on shore for an hour. At present

a small port with an exposed anchorage, it is a position of but little importance, and having been only lately occupied by the French, the new town is rising but slowly from the ruins of its predecessor. The limits are not quite so restricted at Dellys as at the two former places, but a party would require a strong escort of three or four hundred men to proceed overland to Algiers, a distance of sixty miles. Early in the afternoon we landed at Algiers, after a pleasant voyage, principally rendered so by the kind attention of the captain, and for the third time took up our quarters at the Hotel de la Regence.

Having arrived at the conclusion of the narrative, I can imagine the reader, deprived of his expected excitement, exclaiming—“Write on Algeria, and neither mention Abd-el-Kader, nor give a single harrowing description of a skirmish between the Arabs and their invaders! Why, a book on Algeria,

without an Arab chief or a bloody razzia, in at least every third page, is like a dish without seasoning, or bread without salt!—”

Supposing the observation to have been made, I will explain how this has occurred. Visiting the Regency at a period when the tribes were in an almost unexampled state of quiescence (a calm, as it proved to be, before the coming storm), I could state nothing respecting Abd-el-Kader from personal observation, for even the government only knew that he was somewhere on “the frontiers of Morocco”, and although vague rumours were spread abroad of a contemplated inroad, and of insurrections, they did not break out until after our departure, and probably never would have taken place to the extent which they have since done, had it not been for the dreadful tragedy of the Dahra. The difficulty of obtaining authentic information, or at least unbiased opinions, is very great.

There are few men of the present day

whose career has attracted so much attention as that of Abd-el-Kader, and of whose character so little that can be relied upon is known. Independently of the portraits in which he is alternately represented as a patriotic hero, or a cruel savage, the vulgar appetite for the wonderful, with the assistance of the public press, has spread abroad a thousand anecdotes, most of them without the slightest foundation, which add much to the difficulty of arriving at the truth. My impression, however, is, that his character may be defined in a few words.—Ardently desirous of power, his ambition, strengthened by his talents, and confirmed by his religion, exerts a paramount influence over all his actions.

In the prime of life,* he is described as small of stature, with regular features, a pleasing expression, and of mild and gentle manners. Daringly active both in mind

* Abd-el-Kader was born at Gaetna, near Mascara, according to some accounts in 1806, whilst others place the date of his birth two years later.

and body, he has taken advantage of circumstances to place himself at the head of the Arab tribes discontented with Christian rule and unwilling to submit to the restraints of a regular government. For this position, his talents, piety, and lineal descent from the Prophet through his only daughter Fatima, eminently qualify him. Whatever his motive, be it religious ardour, patriotism or ambition, he is a brave man and a skilful leader, struggling for the liberties of the people of his fatherland, and as such he is deserving of our sympathies ; while at the same time every one must regret the continuance of a contest carried on by both parties with so much ferocity, and rejoice in any event that would tend to bring it to a speedy conclusion ; the more so, as it must, if the peace of Europe remains undisturbed, eventually end in his destruction, for every year brings an enormous accession of strength to the European population, whilst the same period sees the numbers of

the Arabs, and their resources, gradually wasting away in a gallant yet fruitless struggle.

Let us hope that out of the present sad state of affairs, the star of Africa may rise once more, cleared from the clouds of ignorance and superstition, which, gathering during twelve centuries, have dimmed its lustre, and cast their dark shadow over what might else have been a bright and happy land.

THE END.



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